

**Russell Kelfer**

**What in  
the World  
is God  
looking for?**

**#1107-B**

**Series: Living Legends - Part 3**

**dtm** DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.  
INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • [www.dtm.org](http://www.dtm.org) • [dtm@dtm.org](mailto:dtm@dtm.org)

# What in the World is God Looking For?

Gretchen was an exceptionally discerning mother. She seemed to have eyes in the back of her head, sensors in her ears that detected not only unusual sounds, but attitudes as well; and she somehow had the ability to determine motives when there appeared to be no visible evidence of their existence. You've met someone like her, I'm sure. In fact, most kids think their mothers have an inside track with God and an angel who "tattles" on them even when their little brother keeps quiet. Well, as I said, she was *that* kind of mother.

That's why people who knew her family well seemed so confused about her handling of her twin boys, Jack and Mac. Jack, you see, was always polite, always attentive, almost responsive to a fault. He did everything his mother asked him to, made super grades in school, and seemed to be interested in spiritual things, as well. Mac, on the other hand, seemed to always do things wrong. He was a little slower in school, a little less neat, seemingly a little less spiritually mature. While Jack seemed in line for class president some day, Mac seemed more in line for the "Gerald Ford Banana Peel Award". I mean, if the box said, "This side up," he would turn it over to see which side was "this side". You know the type. And while Jack was so self-assured and polished that he was picked to play the lead in the class play, Mac was given only the part of a stand-in who didn't have a line to say. Then, lo and behold, when the day for the play came, he slipped while walking on stage and pulled down the curtain with him.

And yet Gretchen had an intuitive feeling about these two boys. When she was congratulated about Jack's accomplishments, she smiled and accepted graciously, but she could be heard to say to her husband, "I'm worried about that boy." "Worried about Jack?" he would answer; "I'm worried about Mac! I'm afraid he'll get a job working at a nuclear power plant and pull the wrong lever and blow up the world." But Gretchen knew something even her husband didn't know. She knew that even though *one boy*

## What in the World is God Looking for?

*was able to achieve, there was something deceptive in his heart.* And even though the other boy seemed to do everything wrong, there was, in his heart of hearts, a genuine desire to be faithful. “His heart is right!” she could be heard muttering to herself just after each one of his catastrophes.

Years passed and Gretchen’s intuition proved to be right. Jack, the achiever, succeeded in his endeavors, but was never able to succeed in the things that counted. He was always just a step ahead of the truth, and a furlong or two behind in the ethics department. Mac, meanwhile, just plodded along and, recognizing his weaknesses, turned to God for strength. His life became a radiant display of godliness, and his marriage became an example of a spiritual picture book.

What was the basic difference? One had the talent; the other didn’t. One had the charisma; the other didn’t. One had the self-confidence; the other didn’t. The difference? *The one who seemed less prone to succeed had a pure heart.* He was guileless in his dealings with God and with man. He was honest in his appraisal of himself and sincere in his relationship with others. The whole world was fooled. The whole world, that is, except his mother, the one person who knew his heart.

Today’s story from the Living Legends of Scripture magnifies that very principle. It asks the question, “What in the world is God looking for?” and it answers it without apology. God is looking for a certain kind of man or woman. He is clear about what He’s looking for. Any confusion is simply the result of our not wanting to understand.

The title and our outline look like this: What in the World is God Looking For?

- I- An Obedient King
- II- A Searching God
- III- A Personal God
- IV- A Jealous God
- V- A Perfect Heart

### I- AN OBEDIENT KING

Our story resumes where we left off in our last lesson. We were looking at the life of a man named Asa. We asked ourselves the question, “Have you ever heard of Asa?” and our response was, for the most part, negative. So we looked into the mirror of

## What in the World is God Looking for?

God's perfect Word, and we saw unfold there the life of a man known by few, but honored by God. A man who "did what was good and right in the sight of the Lord." God was pleased with this man's life. Here was a man who began his term as ruler by tearing down all of the idols, pillars, and altars that had been erected to the false satanic gods, and at the risk of impeachment or a rebellion, an entire nation was scolded for their disobedience and commanded to worship Jehovah and honor His Word.

But, of course, that kind of obedience invites warfare. So we read that the enemy came down and challenged Asa and his troops at Mareshah, outnumbering the armies of Judah by roughly two to one. The flesh would have been tempted to flee, but not God's man. Asa, instead, stopped and talked to God about it. He said:

Then Asa called to the LORD his God, and said, "LORD, there is no one besides Thee to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us, O LORD our God, for we trust in Thee, and in Thy name have come against this multitude. O LORD, let not man prevail against Thee."  
(II Chronicles 14:11 NAS)

And with that act of yielding the reigns of authority to God, Jehovah routed the Ethiopians and God's people claimed the victory and took the spoils. Now we have heard of Asa. And we like what we heard. The story continues in today's study, As we take up reading, we get a quick glance backward to the beginning of Asa's reign, when the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, appeared to Asa. The Spirit of God, we read, came upon Azariah, and he spoke these words to the king in the presence of the whole nation in II Chronicles 15 we read:

...the LORD is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.

And for many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law.

But in their distress they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him.

And in those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands.

And nation was crushed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every kind of distress.

## What in the World is God Looking for?

But you, be strong and do not lose courage, for there is  
reward for your work. (II Chronicles 15:2-7)

Azariah began his discourse with a history lesson. He reminds the people that for years Israel has been on a collision course with destruction, for they have given their lives to idolatry and forsaken the worship of the One True God. But, the prophet reminds them, “whenever the people, in their distress turn to the Lord, the Lord will deliver them. So be strong and don’t lose courage, there is reward for your work.”

Every believer who labors in God’s vineyard needs to meditate in his or her moments of discouragement on II Chronicles 15:

But you, be strong and do not lose courage, for there is  
reward for your work. (II Chronicles 15:7)

Asa listened to it. The next verses describe again what he did. He removed the abominable idols and altars and restored the altar of the Lord. Then he gathered all the nation together at Jerusalem, and they sacrificed to the Lord 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep in one day. The next verse reads:

And they entered into covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and soul;

and whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman.

Moreover, they made an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, and shouting, with trumpets, and with horns.

And all Judah rejoiced concerning the oath, for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought Him earnestly, and He let them find Him. So the LORD gave them rest on every side.

And he also removed Maacah, the mother of King Asa, from the position of queen mother, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah, and Asa cut down her horrid image, crushed it and burned it at the brook Kidron.

But the high places were not removed from Israel; nevertheless Asa’s heart was blameless all his days.

(II Chronicles 15:12-17 NAS)

Asa was not a perfect man. Asa was not a perfect king. In fact, we read in chapter 16 that Hanani, the seer, rebuked him in his later years for depending on his own strength instead of God’s, when Baasha, king of Israel, declared war on Judah. Asa responded to his correction with anger, according to verses 10-14

## What in the World is God Looking for?

of chapter 16, and God had to afflict him and end his reign. So here was a man who was not immune to his bouts with the flesh. In fact, here was a man who ultimately had to be removed from the throne in the forty-first year of his reign, having imprisoned his accuser, and having oppressed innocent people in the process.

Nevertheless, we read, “Asa’s heart was blameless all his days.” All his days? Yes, all his days. But...didn’t you say he...Yes, I did. His career was not flawless, but his heart was blameless all his days. How can that be? It can. And God, just like Gretchen, the wise mother of those twin boys, knows the difference. How? Because while “man looks on the outward appearance, God looks on the heart.” And God knows if you are a star performer in the kingdom, one who has all the answers and all the accolades, but still has a heart that is torn by compromise, and characterized by hypocrisy. Oh, no one else may ever know until your heart is laid bare in eternity. But God knows. And He is not impressed with our performances. Nor is He impressed with the size of our ministries. He is only impressed with one thing, a heart that is blameless and pure.

On the other hand, you may have never led a soul to Christ. You may have never taught a class, never preached a sermon, or never thrilled the masses with your angelic voice. You may be totally unknown in the church, and unknown in the community, yet God may be saying to the angels, “Look at him...look at her. There’s a heart that beats for Me. I like that.”

### II- A SEARCHING GOD

It was from the lips of Hanani when he rebuked Asa in his later years, that we get the big picture of what God is looking for, and *even though this passage was in the context of correcting Asa*, we see just why it was that God considered Asa blameless all his days. The verse reads like this:

For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. (II Chronicles 16:9 NAS)

It is that verse, found in II Chronicles 16:9, that we will focus on for the remainder of this lesson. It tells us why God sees some hearts as blameless, though they appear to be unproductive, and yet sees others as requiring judgment, though they appear to be spiritual giants.

## What in the World is God Looking for?

The first phrase of the passage is perhaps the key to it all. It is a portrait of a searching God. It is a Polaroid snapshot of Jehovah with His heavenly binoculars in place, scanning the earth for healthy hearts. Not for impressive resumes...for healthy hearts. The King James reads,

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.  
(II Chronicles 16:9)

God is out looking for pure-hearted saints. He is combing the brush; He is sailing the seas; He is looking under every theological rock and behind every philosophical shrub. He is not thumbing through their latest thesis or revelling in their latest accomplishments. They may have neither. He is simply looking for a heart that beats for Him. And He is not fooled by the things that fool us.

I believe it's a frustrating search for God. I believe that because we read in Proverbs 20:

Many a man proclaims his own loyalty, But, who can find a trustworthy man?  
(Proverbs 20:6 NAS)

Or as the King James words it:

...a faithful man, who can find (one)?

Ecclesiastes 7:27-29 echoes Solomon's refrain. He says:

Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account:

Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.

Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

A faithful man, who can find one? One man among a thousand, perhaps. But, oh, how few and far between they are. So God searches, searches, searches, from the heavenlies. His X-ray vision looks beyond our good deeds, our pompous religiosity, our masterful command of ministries and men, and looks right...

down...

here...

where we live...

...in our innermost thoughts, where we think no one knows what we're thinking...to our deep, basic attitudes, where we

## What in the World is God Looking for?

assume no one knows what we would do if we knew for sure that no one would ever know. Right there. That's where God is looking. And what He's finding is not a battalion of armed giants ready for the fray. He sometimes searches whole auditoriums full of excited saints singing and praying, without finding even one whose heart is completely His. Yet still, He searches.

Oh, what a joy to have a searching God. Adam and Eve had a searching God. They were given all of the blessings of Heaven and Earth, and only given one exclusion to their freedom. So they clamored for that one no-no, and gave up their rights to an uninterrupted walk with God for the rest of their lives, and passed on to us through Adam's seed, the corruption of sin. So what did God do? Go out and make another Adam? I would have. No, the next thing we hear of God, He's out in the cool of the evening searching for his children. He knows what they've done, but He's going to them to reconcile them to Himself. Oh, we have a searching God. That's why Jesus came to earth. He was searching. He said so Himself. In Luke 19:10 He gave us the reason for His incarnation. It says,

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.

Jesus came searching. And even today, God is still searching.

He is searching for two things. He is searching for us to bring us back to Himself, and He is searching our hearts to see if He can find even one of us whose heart is completely His. He is searching, searching, searching. Because He cares...and because He needs men and women whose lives are not tainted by the alloy of compromise. This hour He is searching where we are...looking for a man, looking for a woman...whose heart is completely His. Perfect? No. But perfectly His? Yes. Such a man was Asa.

### III- A PERSONAL GOD

The second thing that verse tells us is that we have a personal God. The eyes of the Lord are not only searching, they are searching for something in particular. They are searching for one man, one woman, one person whose heart is singular in its allegiance. Jesus preached to the multitudes, but He gave His precious life for us as unique, singular individuals. He saw the disciples each as distinctly different people with distinctly different needs. Peter was nothing like John. Matthew was nothing like Luke. He stopped one man, a man named Paul, on the Damascus road and



## What in the World is God Looking for?

appeared to him because He had a plan for that one man's life. And that plan and that life helped change the course of history. But ours is a personal God. He understands the uniqueness of your situation. He understands how you were made. He made you. He understands what you've been through. He's been there with you. And His heart's desire is not to clone you into some kind of an evangelical cookie-cutter so you talk the same, dress the same, and act the same as all other Christians.

No, God is looking at your heart individually, and He is accepting your life individually. And He is doing the searching personally. He is not sending angels around to check you out. His eyes are searching to and fro, looking, looking, looking. And all He wants is a heart that is totally His. There are not many. There are not enough. So He's searching, looking, desiring to find that life...that one life.

### IV- A JEALOUS GOD

So what we have is a searching God; and what we have is a personal God. Finally, what we have is a jealous God. He is searching personally for one thing, and *only one thing*. He is searching for a man or a woman whose *heart is completely His*. Because, you see, ours is a jealous God. Not jealous in the sense that He wants to take something from us, but jealous in the sense that He wants to keep something from us that is evil. He wants to protect us from the evil one. So He keeps a jealous guard over our souls, desiring that we experience nothing less than the best He has for us.

So when our hearts yearn for anything less than all of Him, His heart breaks. He is a jealous God, so He spends His time looking, searching, seeking. His eyes run to and fro all throughout the earth, all throughout the church, all throughout His Body looking for that kind of man or woman...*one whose heart is completely His!*

### V- A PERFECT HEART

But what is a perfect heart ? What does it mean to have a heart that is completely His? First of all, you have to understand the difference between the world's concepts of success and God's. Because if you determine whether or not you are successful based on either the world's standards, or even for the most part, the church's standards, you can live your entire life and

What in the World is God Looking for?

never know you missed the heart of God. This ridiculous chart of mathematical formulas at least calls attention to the problem:

GOD'S STANDARD

Guilelessness + Holiness = Godliness  
without Compromise

CHURCH'S STANDARD

Spiritual Behavior = Spirituality  
Hypocrisy + Religiosity

WORLD'S STANDARD

(Achievement + Acceptance = Success)

You see, to the world, success is measured by two things: achievement and acceptance. So it doesn't matter what it took to get you there, or how rotten your heart may be, if you achieve in your field, or are accepted and applauded wherever you go, you have arrived. So "Achievement + Acceptance = Success".

The church knows better, but it is affected by the world's philosophy. It wants acceptance, and it wants success, but it understands, as the song says, "Only what's done for Christ will last." So often the church will measure success or spirituality, as we choose to call it, by external accomplishments within the realm of the Spirit: how many souls are won, how many churches are built, how many verses are quoted, how many dollars are raised, how many members are enlisted. And so often, as well, in our quest to accomplish spiritual things, we think that Hypocrisy and Religiosity covered over by spiritual behavior impresses God. No so. His eyes are searching to and fro looking for pure hearts, even within the confines of that active, accomplishing church. Your church's budget won't impress God. Your humble, committed heart will.

God, you see, is really looking for only one thing. A heart that is completely His. There are a million ways to measure the purity of our hearts.

Is our response to tribulation glorious in the presence of others, but followed by anger and bitterness when we're alone? Do we talk of spiritual victories when surrounded by the saints, then complain about life's inequities when we're alone? That's not a perfect heart.

Do we speak with purity and wholesomeness when surrounded

## What in the World is God Looking for?

by those who desire such behavior, then when we think no one's around, look for and listen to things that we know are vile and corrupt? That's not a perfect heart.

Do we speak of charity and unselfishness in the light of men's needs, then grumble and complain about having to give; clutching at what we have as though it were ours after all? That's not a pure heart.

Do we talk of spending time with God as though it were the epitome of life's goals, yet when the curtains are drawn, and no one is listening, we have to force ourselves to give God even a moment of our time? That's not a perfect heart.

Do we speak of submitting to those in authority over us as though we were submitting to God Himself, then when the moment of truth comes, rebel and murmur that God would put such a person as that in authority or power? That's not a perfect heart.

Do we have to be sure that somebody knows whenever we do something spiritually significant? Do we need to let it slip that we led someone to Christ, or memorized a verse, or gave money to someone in need? That may be impressive; but it doesn't come from a perfect heart.

Are we the first in line to "claim the promises" and ask God to give us what we want, then, like the healed lepers, go away and forget to say "thank you" for what He does? That's not the response of a perfect heart.

No, a perfect heart doesn't produce a perfect life. The flesh will jump in and make mistakes, but even those mistakes will be followed by immediate grief, not just at the consequences, but at having broken the heart of God.

For the heart that is completely God's would rather suffer in prison and die than break the heart of God. He would rather face the wrath of man than to know that even in some small way, he has bruised that delicate layer of love with which His God has covered him. The heart that is completely God's has only one aim in life, only one motive in life, only one reward in life: Jesus.

Asa did what was good and right in the sight of the Lord.

Asa's heart was blameless all the days of his life.

Because he lived a perfect life? Not really. It was because

What in the World is God Looking for?

he had a heart that was guileless and pure before God. It was constantly his heart's desire to let God be God. He failed many times, but *he never failed to be blameless in the eyes of God.*

And that's what God is looking for. The eyes of the Lord are, even right now, running to and fro, searching high and low, looking, searching, earnestly desiring to find...a man, a woman, a young person whose heart is completely His.

Oh, that He might find that kind of heart in us.

**dtm** DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230

210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778

www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer

(03.06.13)