

# Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2022.12.04

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## Sermon recordings

Scan the QR codes, type the QR code short URL, or visit oakgrovecofc.org/Recordings/.

**Speaker-AM:** Steve Helterbrand

**Title:** Forget And Strive

**Recording:**

[tinyurl.com/SteveStrive](https://tinyurl.com/SteveStrive)



**Speaker-PM:** Kraig Benney

**Title:** Weariness

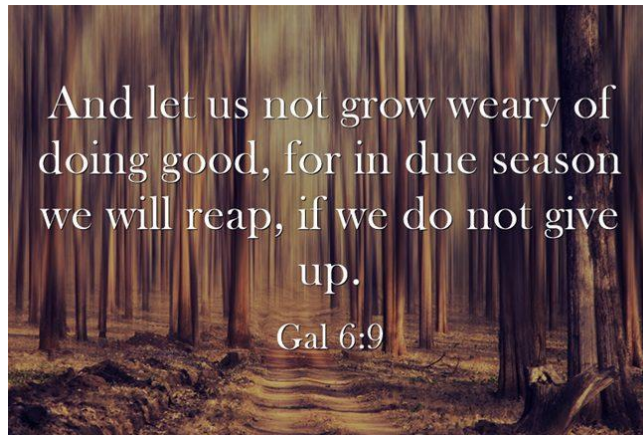
**Recording:**

[tinyurl.com/KraigWeariness](https://tinyurl.com/KraigWeariness)



And let us not grow weary of  
doing good, for in due season  
we will reap, if we do not give  
up.

Gal 6:9



## **Articles**

### **Are We Asking the Right Question About God and Evil?, 12/01/2022, by Perry Hall**

I have been studying and teaching "The Problem of Evil and Theodicy." The main question usually asked is, "If God is good, why does God allow evil in this world?" The question needs to change.

Change is needed because I am not sure that question is plainly asked and answered in the Bible. Theology and philosophy attempt to satisfy and give plausible answers. Considering we are having Bible classes and not philosophy seminars means we follow a different syllabus.

If not that question, then what? The Bible is filled with living out another question: "What is God doing about the evil in the world?" Study the question of theodicy from that perspective and we see how righteous our God is.

The last enemy to be conquered is death (I Corinthians 15). So the ultimate answer to, "What is God doing about the evil in the world?" is found in Jesus and the resurrection of both our spirits here (Romans 6), and our bodies later (I Thessalonians 4-5). Hope is the antidote to despair.

Fairness demands we ask the right questions and accept the questions being asked and the answers that are given. I wouldn't ask a mechanic to use his tools to diagnose my blood pressure.

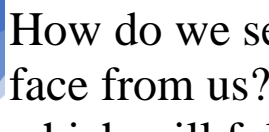
Asking what we want to know is understandable. But if we demand an answer to a question that is not being asked, we will be left frustrated. I'm not convinced the Bible addresses clearly the question we want to be answered: "If God is good, then why does God allow evil in the world?" However, I am confident that the Bible demonstrates what God is doing about the evil in this world. That answer is Jesus.

## Seeking the Face of God, 12/02/2022, by Mike Johnson

Many think David wrote Psalm 27 when fleeing from Saul, which is likely the case. Earlier in the Psalm, he expresses strong faith and confidence in God, but Psalms 27:8-9 reflect him apparently facing difficulties. In these verses, he addresses God saying, "When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide Your face from me; do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation.'" David says he will seek God's face and asks God not to turn His face from him. This may have been at a time when David was struggling with himself or God. Perhaps he felt God had not responded to his prayers as quickly as he would have liked and had turned His face away. What does the concept of God turning His face from someone mean? We will look further at this concept and see what we might learn.

To begin with, the concept of seeking the face of God or God hiding His face from someone appears several times in the Scriptures (Job 13:24; Psalms 13:1; 44:24; 69:17; 88:14; 102:2). Someone may say, "But, God is a spirit and does not have a face." References to the "face" of God is a figure of speech called "anthropomorphism," which means attributing human characteristics or behavior to a god, animal, or object. God turning His face toward a person entails receiving His protection, presence, guidance, and favor. God hiding His face from someone would mean being without these things.

Next, we see in our text that God took the initiative, asking the Psalmist to seek His face. His statement tells us that the Lord wants to have a relationship with us; He wants everyone to be saved (II Peter 3:8-10). So often, rulers and others of importance are not interested in having contact with the people. This attitude is not the case with God, as He wants us to seek His face. David's response was like an echo as he said he would seek God's face. Then David, perhaps expressing frustration, asked God not to hide His face from him.



How do we seek the face of God? How do we keep God from hiding His face from us? Various passages tell us how to do this and the benefits which will follow. Note II Chronicles 7:14. “if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” This verse shows that seeking God’s face involves humility, praying, and turning from wicked ways. God will then “hear from heaven,” and we will receive forgiveness.

Consider Psalm 105:104. “Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord! Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face evermore!” This verse shows that one must give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name, and make known His deeds, among others. We must also sing psalms to Him, talk of His wondrous works, glory in His name, and seek His strength.

Note another passage. “Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face” (Psalms 24:3-6). From these verses, we see that seeking the face of the Lord involves having clean hands and a pure heart and not having worshiped idols or having sworn deceitfully. As a result, we will receive blessings and righteousness from God, who will save us.

Are we seeking the face of God? Is God hiding his face from us? We must always seek the face of God!