

## DRAWING NEAR UNTO GOD

### Int.

1. Aim: To show how we can draw near to God and why we should do it!
2. Jas. 4:8 **"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."**
  - a. Get close to God
  - b. We are to resist the devil and he will flee - Jas. 4:7 **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."**
  - c. But stay close to God and He will stay close to us
  - d. We don't draw near physically - going north, or south, east or west \ or up and down
    - i. Because He is **"not far from every one of us."** Acts 17:27
    - ii. We cannot escape his presence - Ps. 139:8-10 **"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 9. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10. Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."**
  - e. But we must draw near to him spiritually
  - f. 2 Chron. 15:2 -- Azariah told Asa **"And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."**
  - g. Cleanse your hands and purify your hearts
    - i. We must be clean inside and out
    - ii. We have to make some changes to draw near unto God
3. Three things we will notice:
  - a. The initiative
  - b. Advantages
  - c. Proper Procedures

## Discussion

### **I. THE INITIATIVE**

- A. Initiative is important
1. In everything from checkers to a battle - "Whose move is it?"
  2. That can determine victory or defeat !
  3. Initiative of drawing near to God is also important.
- B. Original initiative was with God
1. Man sinned - so it was God's move
  2. In the garden he asked **"Adam where art thou?"** Gen. 3:9
  3. He called Prophets - He called Abraham - he called more prophets to preserve Israel?
  4. Finally as a last resort he sent his only begotten son that men could believe in Him and be saved! Here the initiative changed hands
- C. Initiative is now Man's - It is now man's move
1. Rom. 3:23 **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."**
  2. He must do something to be saved !
  3. N.T. teaches that man has the initiative !
    - a. Mt. 11:29-30 **"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30. For my yoke [is] easy, and my burden is light."**
    - b. Jn. 7:37b **"...if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."**
- D. There is nothing more God can do
1. He sent his son - John 3:16
  2. He has done His part in man's redemption

3. Parable of vineyard - Mk. 12:1-12
  - a. Owner sent a servant, another, and many more = all rejected
  - b. Finally he sent his son - he was rejected and killed
  - c. Christ is God's last word. The utmost in God's love has already been exhausted in what He has done for man's salvation !
4. Man must now act or be lost.

## **II. ADVANTAGES OF DRAWING NEAR TO GOD**

- A. Joy
  1. Drawing near to God brings wonderful Joy
  2. All who were converted illustrate this:
    - a. The Eunuch went "**on his way rejoicing**" Acts 8:39
    - b. The Jailor "**rejoiced with all his household**" Acts 16:34
  3. The redeemed soul knows the great joy of drawing near to God.
- B. Reduces power of temptation
  1. At crucifixion Peter followed afar off and John stayed close
  2. No doubt John's closeness had something to do with his not denying Christ
  3. God's influence in our hearts will help us overcome temptations
  4. 1 Cor. 10:13 "**There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.**"

### **III. PROCEDURE IN DRAWING NEAR TO GOD**

- A. Drawing near has certain details
1. All rulers, kings, and dignitaries have certain rules and procedures for those who come to them
  2. Example in O.T. book of Esther
    - a. King Ahashuerus put to death all who came except on his invitation - if he decided not to accept them.
    - b. Esther risked her life by violating this rule in order to save her people from wicked Haman
  3. God has also appointed a proper way for man to approach Him
  4. This is found in the N.T. for men living today
- B. Heb.10:21-22 **"And having an high priest over the house of God; 22. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."** Here is the pattern or procedure to approach God:
1. Symbolic of the Old Testament
    - a. The priests entered the Tabernacle [later the temple] to offer an atonement to God for the people
    - b. There were certain procedures they had to follow: they had to be clean physically and morally and spiritually before they could approach God
    - c. It is necessary today to follow certain procedures in drawing near to God
  2. A True Heart
    - a. Must be sincere and honest - free from all guile
    - b. God has always demanded a pure heart free from deceit and hypocrisy

- c. Scriptures prove this
  - (1) Pro. 4:23 "**Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.**"
  - (2) Mt. 5:8 "**Blessed [are] the pure in heart: for they shall see God.**"
- d. No double motives or hidden unbelief shall prevail with God.
- e. Only a true sincere heart can draw near to God
- f. In the parable of the sower, the seed which produced fruit was that which fell upon good ground, or "**an honest and good heart.**" Lk. 8:15

### 3. In Full Assurance of Faith

- a. There are many degrees of faith:
  - (1) Little faith = Mt. 6:30
  - (2) Weak faith = Demas
  - (3) Vain faith - 1 Cor 15:14-17
  - (4) Dead faith = Jas. 2:17
- b. But the faith that saves is:
  - (1) Great faith - Lk. 7:9
  - (2) Obedient faith - Rom. 4:9
  - (3) Working faith - Jas. 2:24
  - (4) Loving faith - Gal. 5:6
- c. Faith alone is a perversion of scriptures
  - (1) We are saved by the grace of God
  - (2) But faith without obedience will not bring us near to God. - Jas. 2:17
- d. Full assurance of faith
  - (1) Unwavering confidence - no room for doubt
  - (2) Faith which enable s us to take "God at his word." and do exactly what he commands

(3) Philip told the Eunuch "**If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest**"

Acts 8:37

(4) To approach God without this faith is dishonoring to Him and injurious to ourselves.

(5) Heb. 11:6 **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."**

4. Having hearts sprinkled from and evil conscience

a. Sprinkle heart = which is mind, or the reasoning part of man

b. Evil conscience = guilty, oppressed conscience because of sin

c. We have our consciences made free because of the blood of Christ shed on the cross. He died to forgive us our sins

d. Heb. 9:14 **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"**

e. This knowledge of Christ's atonement for us is repentance - Godly sorrow

f. II Cor. 7:10

5. Bodies washed with Pure water

a. This refers to baptism which stands at the gateway to the kingdom of God.

b. Analogy - Priest who ministered about sanctuary, washed completely in laver that stood near the door before he entered. Before he washed he showed his faith in the animal sacrifice by having his ear, hand, and great toe of his right foot sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice. After he washed he received white robes symbolical of spiritual cleanliness.

- c. Same analogy is true in Christian's heart!
    - (1) Has true heart- sincere
    - (2) He comes in full faith - sprinkled with deep conviction that Christ died for his sins
    - (3) Then baptized into Christ - Gal. 3:27
  
  - d. Bodies washed with pure water refers to baptism
    - (1) Acts 22:16
    - (2) Be purified - cleansed - sins washed away
    - (3) 1 Pet. 3:21
    - (4) Eph. 5:26
- C. All of this stands for the plan of salvation B.R.C.B.=Baptism

### **Conclusion**

1. Jas.4:8 NKJV **"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."**
  - a. Draw near to God and God will draw near to you
  - b. It's man's move for God has done everything he could for our salvation - man has the initiative in drawing near to God.
  - c. The advantage of being near God is of course eternal life
2. Heb. 10:21-22 The way to draw near is simple so all can obey:
  - (1) Come with a true heart
  - (2) In full assurance of Faith
  - (3) Having hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience
  - (4) And Body washed with pure water

3. Are you ready to come to God? To draw near to God you must....
  - a. Hear
  - b. Believe
  - c. Repent
  - d. Confess
  - e. Be baptized
  - f. Then salvation from your sins bring you near to God.
4. David said to Solomon 1 Chro. 28:9 "**And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever."**

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Sermon by Arthur Pigman -  
 Evans Church of Christ  
 515 Gibbs Road  
 Evans, Ga. 30809  
 706-855-1249  
 arthurligman@cybrtyme.com