

How To Draw Near To God (Pt-2)

Text : **James 4: 4-10 ; Hebrews 10: 19-25**

S#1.

S#2.

A. The need for a nearness with our creator is written in man's DNA.

1. Man was created to be a companion for God.
2. Both God and man enjoyed their daily stroll through the garden. **Gen. 3:8**
3. Ever since the relationship was destroyed by sin, both man and God have longed to restore their fellowship.
 - a. People who are separated from God feel incomplete and unsatisfied.
 - b. Even those who don't know the source of their emptiness seek to fill it.
4. God also feels a desire to restore man's relationship with Him.
 - a. BUT, God is holy so He cannot draw near to one who is polluted with sin.
 - b. Because of His desire for fellowship with man, God sent His son to be a sacrifice.
 - c. Because of man's weakness, the Man Jesus still mediates / advocates for man.

B. In our previous lesson we began an exegesis of a command given by James and also by the writer of Hebrews.

1. **Heb. 10: 22** – Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **S#3.**
2. **James 4: 7-8** – Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. **8** Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. **S#4.**

C. It's an amazing thing that the holy God will even allow a man to approach Him.

1. The psalmist urges believers to worship God on His holy hill.
Psa. 99: 9 – Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His holy hill, For holy is the Lord our God. (*He's saying, "Go to church."*)
2. When the prophet sees a vision of the Lord being worshipped, He is exalted as Holy.
Isa. 6: 1-3 – In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. **S#5.**
2 Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.
3 And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory."
3. **Rev. 4: 8** – And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, Who was and Who is and Who is to come. **S#6.**
4. *How amazing it is that God will allow us into His presence under any circumstance.*

S#7.

I. In part one of our study we observed some requirements for approaching God.**A. We observed that one must approach God “with a sincere heart.”**

S#8.

1. Men can only see our outward actions, but God communicates with men’s heart.

John 4: 23 – But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

2. God has certain prescribed rituals that must be followed or God rejects worshippers.

Lev. 10: 1-3 – Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective **S#9.** firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. **2** And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. **3** Then Moses said to Aaron, "It is what the Lord spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'" So Aaron, therefore, kept silent.

3. No matter how perfectly the rituals are performed, God rejects insincere worship.

Matt. 15: 7-9 – You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: **8** 'This **S#10.** people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. **9** 'but in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.'

B. One must draw near to God “in full assurance of faith.”

S#11.

1. Faith is very the foundation of man’s relationship with God.

Heb. 11: 6 – And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

2. God had an entire book put in the gospels for the express purpose of building faith.

John 20: 30-31– Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the **S#12.** presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; **31** but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

3. The Apostle then wrote a book to reassure the saved that they really are saved.

I John 5: 13 – These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

S#13.

C. One must approach God with his heart “sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.”

1. Dedicated people strive to live right, but in spite of one’s best efforts, we all sin.

a. **Rom. 3: 23** – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

b. **Rom. 6: 23** – For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. However, God is willing to forgive the sins that Christian confesses.

I John 1:-9 – If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. S#14.

3. Once our sins have been forgiven we should not have a guilty conscience.

a. **Rom. 8: 1 – There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

- b. The blood of Jesus frees the Christian from ALL feelings of guilt.

Heb. 9: 13-14 – For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? S#15.

D. One who draws near to God must have his body “washed with pure water.” S#16.

1. Baptism is where one is cleansed by the blood of Christ.

I Pet. 3: 21 – the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, (*Cleansed by blood of Jesus Heb 9:14*)

2. Baptism is how one calls on the name of the Lord and has his sins forgiven.

a. **Rom. 10: 23 – for whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved** S#17.

b. **Acts 22: 16 – Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.' (Cf– Heb. 9: 14, Rev. 1:5)**

S#18.

II. In his book to Christians, James gives several commands about approaching God.

A. James commands : James 4:8 – Draw near to God and He will draw near to you

1. “Draw near” { *eggizo* } is an aorist verb in the imperative mood ... thus a command

2. An aorist verb indicates a continuous action .. *Some we must do and continue doing*

S#19.

B. He command us to “submit” ourselves to God, to “humble” ourselves in His presence

1. **James 4: 10 – Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.**

2. **James 4: 6-7 – But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” 7 Submit therefore to God.**

a. “Submit” is a military term { *hupotasso* }

- 1) A Greek military term meaning “to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader”

- 2) In non-military use, it was “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.”

- b. “Humble” { *tapeinoo* } 1 to make low 1_B to abase, to be ranked below others who are honored or rewarded 1_C devoid of all haughtiness.
 - c. Thus, man must voluntarily lower himself before the almighty God.
- 3. God is repulsed by the proud.

Prov. 16: 5 – Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; **S#20.**
Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.
- 4. Pride is at the top of the list of things God hates.

Prov. 6: 16-17 – There are six things which the Lord hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: 17 Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood,
- 5. God is against those with pride so one must be humble before approaching God.

I Pet. 5: 5b-6 – ...all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, **S#21.**
for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.
Therefore humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that He
- 6. Jesus taught the importance of humility.

Luke 18: 9-14 – ... 13 But the tax collector, standing some distance away, **S#22.**
was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' 14 I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.
- 7. Jesus set the example for us to follow.

Phil. 2: 5-8 – Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, **S#23.**
6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

 - a. In Christ it matters not what you start off as, what matters is what you become.
 - b. Jesus was the Lord of glory, but He became what God needed .. a sacrificial lamb.
 - c. We must humble ourselves before almighty God.
- C. James commands us to “resist the devil.” (*Takes commitment and effort*) **S#24.**
 - 1. Resistance requires vigilance.
 - a. **I Pet. 5: 8** – Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your **adversary**, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
 - b. Christians must never forget that the devil is our enemy and seeks to destroy us.
 - 2. God has provided all that we need to successfully resist the devil. **S#25.**

Eph. 6: 10-11 – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.
11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

3. When the battle becomes too intense, God will always provide an avenue of retreat.

a. **I Cor. 10: 13** – No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will **not allow** you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. **S#26.**

b. The choice is always ours; Satan can never force us to surrender. *Never alone*

4. Satan will try to intimidate us in many ways.

I Pet. 3: 14-15 – But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. and do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, **15** but sanctify **Christ as Lord** in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

S#28.

5. Thus, Christians must never be intimidated by Satan. *God give us a spirit of power.*

a. **II Tim. 1: 7** – For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

b. When you are made to feel shy, fearful or intimidated, that is Satan working in you.

D. James commands us to be miserable, mourn and weep; to be sorrowful. **S#29.**

1. **James 1: 9** – Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.

2. Jesus taught the same thing in the Sermon on the Mount.

S#30.

Matt. 5:4 – Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

3. Does this not contradict the teachings of Paul?

Phil. 4: 4 – Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

4. James and Jesus are both discussing a spiritual concept – be remorseful for sin.

a. **Psa 51: 16-17** – For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. **17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. **S#31.**

b. **II Cor. 7: 9-10** – I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. **10** For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death. **S#32.**

5. True repentance is required in order to approach God.

S#33.

a. **Luke 22: 61-62** – The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, " Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." **62** And he went out and wept bitterly.

b. When is the last time we wept over our sins ? (*Because of sins, not consequences*)

E. One must approach God with clean hands and a purified heart.**S#34.**

1. **James 1: 8** – Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.
2. The purification of one's heart refers to being committed to Christ.
 - a. A purified heart does not have mixed loyalties. *Not trying to serve 2 masters*
 - b. There is no love for the world or seeking of friendship with the world.
3. The cleansing of hands refers to the dedication of one's life, *his walk with God*.
 - a. **Heb. 12: 14** – Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.
 - b. We must constantly be discussing our walk with Jesus and asking His forgiveness.
I John 1: 8-9 – If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

S#35.**III. SO, How does one draw near to God ?**

- A. He must recognize the glory, majesty, power and holiness of God. **S#36**
 - B. His heart must be devoted to God above all else.
 - C. He must have full confidence in his faith that God is and keeps promises.
 - D. He must approach with a heart that is cleansed, that free of guilt. **S#37.**
 - E. He must have been washed in the blood of Christ and added to His family.
 - F. He must humble himself before God in complete submission.
 - G. He must accept God's enemy as his own and be a war with the devil. **S#38.**
 - H. He must be truly sorrowful for the sins that he has committed.
 - I. He must have as the goal of his life to be godly in both mind and body.
- * This is the pattern God has set forth for us, the roadmap to His throne room. **S#39.**
Eph. 3: 11-12 – This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, **12** in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

INVITATION : Do you feel confident to approach the throne of God ?**S#40.****S#41.** ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**James 4: 4-10**

4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. **5** Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? **6** But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "*God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*" **7** Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. **8** Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. **9** Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. **10** Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Hebrews 10: 19-25

19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, **20** by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; **24** and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, **25** not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.