

How To Draw Near To God (Pt-1)

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

S#1.

A. Do you feel close to God or sometimes does He feel far away.

1. David, the man after God's own heart, sometimes felt isolated and far from God.

Psa. 22: 1-2 – My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. **2** O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; and by night, but I have no rest. **S#2.**

2. **Psa. 13: 1-2** – How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? **2** How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? **S#3.**

B. How does one make it without God in his life ?

S#4.

1. Feeling estranged from God is the dark night of the soul, it is emptiness of spirit.
2. People can't know what you are feeling so, though they try, they let you down.
3. Millions grope in the darkness not knowing the source of their emptiness.
 - a. They seek comfort in the arms of others, but it is fleeting at best.
 - b. Some seek thrills to make them feel alive, but when the adrenaline is gone
 - c. Others try to dull their despair with alcohol or drugs, but the morning comes.

S#5.

C. Your creator loves you, knows just what you need and wants to be near to you.

1. **Gen. 3** ... God created man to have daily fellowship with him, but man sinned and ..
2. **Phil. 2** ... He left to splendor of Heaven to reach out to you.
3. **Matt. 11: 28-30** – Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. **29** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

D. God wants all His creation to be close to Him, but we must approach him in the way He instructed us.

S#6.

1. **Gen. 3** ... God thrilled in the fellowship of Adam and Eve, but rejected them.
2. **Gen. 4** ... God received the offering of Abel, but reject Cain's.
3. **Lev. 10** ... God destroyed the sons of Aaron when they used strange fire for offering
4. **II Sam. 6** ... God struck down Uzzah for touching the arch of the covenant.
5. **Acts 5** ... God struck a Christians couple dead when they lied about their offering.

If we are to draw near to God, we must do it on His terms.

I. We must draw near to God with a sincere heart.**S#7.****A. Of what do we speak when we refer to a “sincere” heart.**

1. This word { *alethinous* } could well be translated in the negative ... not hypocritical, not fictitious, not counterfeit, but true, as represented.
2. This is the character of worship which God demands of those who approach Him.

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.

S#8.**B. God is aware of every man’s motives as well as his actions/deeds.****S#9.**

1. God is continually holding men accountable for their motives.

I Cor. 4: 5 – Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

2. We are only able to observe men’s actions, but not the motives behind them.

- a. **II Cor. 8: 7-8** – But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work also. **8** I am not speaking this as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also.

S#10.

- b. ILL- The first step in becoming enthusiastic is to learn how to act enthusiastic.

C. Insincere actions can have some positive effect, but aren’t acceptable to God.

1. Some preached the gospel motivated by hatred for Paul and Paul said, “Okay.”

Phil. 1: 15-18 – Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; **16** the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; **17** the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment. **18** What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice.

S#11.

2. God rejects the worship/service of those who don’t approach Him with sincere hearts

Mark 7: 6-7 – And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘this people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. **7** But in vain their heart is far away from Me, teaching as doctrine the precepts of men.’

S#12.

3. **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#13.

II. We must draw near to God with full assurance of faith.**S#14.****A. If one is to draw near to God, he must be totally convinced about Him.**

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#15.**

2. Faith is the vehicle which one must use when he desires to approach 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.

B. God will not receive those who doubt Him.

1. Those who doubt will not have their prayers answered.

James 1: 6-8 – But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. **S#16.**
7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, **8** being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

2. Jesus taught us that we must not doubt the power of God.

Mark 11: 22-24 – And Jesus answered saying to them, "Have faith in God." **S#17.**
23 Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him.
24 Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you." **S#18.**

C. God wants us to be saved and to know we are saved so He inspired John to write

1. **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.
2. What is there in the book that would give us such confidence of our salvation?
 - a. God wants to forgive us if we will humble ourselves before Him.
 - b. Jesus loves us and is interceding for us in Heaven.
 - c. We should love each other, love Him and show it by being obedient.

D. How do we develop "a sincere heart" and the "full assurance of faith"

1. **Rom. 10: 14, 17** – How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? ... **17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. **S#19.**
2. **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.

III. We must draw near to God with a clear conscience.**S#20.****A. Everyone sins so how can we live with a clear conscience ?**

1. **Heb. 10: 22** – Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, **S#21.**
having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience
and our bodies washed with pure water.
2. Knowing the judgment day is coming, all believers strive for a clear conscience.
Acts 24: 16 – In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men.
3. The problem is that we ALL sin and do it with great frequency.
 - a. **Rom. 3: 23** – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God **S#22.**
 - 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.

B. We cannot draw near to God unless and until the guilt of sin is removed. S#23.

1. In order to have the guilt of sin removed, one must be IN Christ Jesus.
Rom. 8: 1 – There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
2. It is only the blood of Christ that can remove sin and give a clear conscience.
Heb. 9: 13-14 – For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer **S#24.**
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?

C. Ongoing confession of sin brings ongoing forgiveness to those in Christ.

1. If we are to have a clear conscience, we must do our best to live right.
 - a. **Heb. 12: 12-14** – Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the **S#25.**
knees that are feeble, **13** and make straight paths for your feet, so
that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather
be healed. **14** Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification
without which no one will see the Lord
 - b. **I John 1: 6-7** – If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in **S#26.**
the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; **7** but if we
walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship
with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.
 - c. Remember ... 5: 13 ... This book is written to Christians.
2. **I John 1: 8-9** – If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and **S#27.**
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.

IV. We must draw near to God with our bodies washed.**S#28.****A. Is personal hygiene part of our relationship with God :****S#29.**

1. If not why is having our body washed a precondition to being near to God ?
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.**
2. People were required to wash and put on special clothes before approaching a king.
3. **I King 7: 22ff** ... There was a bronze laver in front of the temple to cleanse priests.

B. Christians are cleansed by the blood of Christ before entering the church. S#30.

1. All who will call on the name of the Lord can be saved.
 - a. **Rom. 10: 23** – **for whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved** **S#31.**
 - b. How does one call on the name of the Lord ? “Sinner’s prayer ?”
2. The Apostle Paul was instructed to wash away his sins in baptism.
Acts 22: 16 – **Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'**
 - a. After talking with Jesus, seeing a vision, praying w/ fasting he still had sins.
 - b. He was told that baptism and calling on His name would remove sin.

C. Washing is also linked with forgiveness in other places.**S#32.**

1. **Eph. 5: 25-27** – **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, **26** so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **27** that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.** **S#33.**
2. **Titus 3: 5-6** – **He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, **6** whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,** **S#34.**
3. **I Cor. 6: 11** – **Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.** **S#35.**

D. How will we draw near to God ?

- Heb. 10: 22** – **let us draw near **(1)** with a sincere heart **(2)** in full assurance of faith, **(3)** having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and **(4)** our bodies washed with pure water.** **S#36.**

INVITATION :**S#37.** ... 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.