

Lord, I Want To Draw Near

Key Verse:

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”

James 4:8a

Portion for the Journey:

If we desire intimate friendship with God, we need to draw near to Him. We must make the conscious decision to draw near to God. Our flesh does not want to get too close to God because we immediately sense our unworthiness to be in the presence of His Holiness. The enemy uses our sins, imperfections of the flesh, and our guilty conscience condemn us and cause us to shrink back from the LORD. Even Adam and Eve, who had walked so close to the LORD hid from Him when they had disobeyed God. Jesus’ ministry when he came to this world, was to show us the way to the Father through Him! Through Jesus, we can come to the Father, just as we are!! We can never come on the basis of our own worthiness, but Jesus makes us worthy through His blood that was shed for us and through His perfect life!! Do you want to be like John, who rested his head on Jesus bosom, or those who tried to worship Him from afar off? This question is important if we want to truly grow and mature in our relationship with Him.

PRAYER: Lord, I want to know You. I want to know Your Word. But I realize that this is going to require something from me—a willingness to draw near to You and not stand far off or shrink back. I know that it has to be on Your terms and not my own!! Help me!! Help me to trust You enough to draw near! Help me to be willing to lay down those things in my life that I have been stubbornly holding on to that hinder me from following You fully! LORD, I realize that for me to draw near to You, You will have to work in my heart and make me ready! Help me to believe that You will draw near to me as I make this decision to draw close to You. Help me! Open the word to me because Your Word says, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” So I believe that as I study Your Word, You will give me faith!

Digging Deeper In The Word:

Does the very thought of drawing really close to God kind of make you tremble and quake? Take heart, beloved of the LORD, you are not alone in that feeling!! It’s time to take out your Bible! We will look up these verses and ponder what the Bible says about drawing near to God.

Let’s first read about how the Israelites handled their invitation to draw near to God. This is a longer passage, but hopefully, you are finding your hunger for His Word growing!! **Read Exodus Chapters 19-20. Read the entire two chapters first, then we will go back and answer the questions.**

1. What did God promise the Israelites? (see Exodus 19:1-6)

2. How did the Israelites initially respond to this invitation and God's conditions? (Exodus 19:7-8)

3. How did the people react when they actually sensed the presence of God? (Exodus 20:18-19)

4. What did they miss out on because of their great fear?

5. How do you think you would have reacted in the same circumstances?

6. Can you see parallels to this passage in the way that believers look to leaders in the Church today?

7. How do you relate to the Israelites? Are you content "stand afar off" and let someone else approach the LORD to get His Word, so they can relay it to you, or do you want the relationship that Moses had with God, where it says that the LORD spoke with him as a friend, face to face?

Now let's look at a few New Testament verses. Remember on our own we couldn't come near to God, because of His holiness, but through faith in Jesus and what He has done for us, we can, because His blood makes us worthy.

Turn to Hebrews 4:16 in your Bible. This verse is one of my favorites in the Bible! It is an excellent verse to memorize!! Let's read it together in several different translations.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (New King James)

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need. (New American Standard)

Heb 4:16 ¹⁶ Let us then fearlessly *and* confidently *and* boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God's unmerited favor to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it]. (Amplified Version)

Now, try your hand at writing a paraphrase of this verse, putting it into the words that make the verse most meaningful to you. You can make it personal by putting your name in instead of "us" or "we".

Additional Scriptures for further study: Make notes as to what each of these verses is teaching you about drawing near to the LORD. Especially note what is necessary in order to draw near to the LORD and what He promises for those who do!

Zechariah 3:1-7

Heb 10:38-39

I Jn 2:28 [Note: The word “shrink back” in the Greek is hupostello and it means: “to withhold from out of sight, i.e. (reflexively) to cower or shrink, (figuratively) to conceal (reserve), draw (keep) back, shun, withdraw or abstain from associating with.

John 3:19-21

1 John 1:7

What Is God Telling You?

What is the LORD speaking to Your heart as you complete today’s study? Can you feel His Spirit inviting you to draw closer to Him? Is your faith in Jesus so you can do this?

Response To God:

Beloved, do not worry if you are not ready to approach that holy mountain yet!! He is willing to meet you right where you are today! Jesus longs to take our hands and lead us closer! How many times did He say, “Fear Not!!” Tell the LORD your fears! Just pour out your heart to Him.