

Coming To God (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.”

- I. Believing and knowing there is a God, in and of itself, is not sufficient to please God and is not an indication that we are coming to God.
 - A. The devils believe in God. (**JAM 2:19**)
 - B. Ungodly men can know and believe there is a God and know there is coming judgement for sin, yet be condemned objects of his wrath.
 - 1. God has revealed his existence and power unto them. (**ROM 1:18-20**)
 - 2. At some point they know and believe there is a God, but they don't give him due glory and they become fools. (**ROM 1:21-22,28**)
 - 3. Even though they know and believe there is a judgement for their sin, yet still they don't come to God. (**ROM 1:18,32**)
- II. To be able to come to God, one must already be an adopted, born again child of God.
 - A. This initial “coming to God” cannot be resisted. It is God's doing alone. (**TIT 3:5, EPH 1:3-6; JAM 1:18**)
 - B. The ability for God's children to obey the commandment to believe in Jesus Christ is His doing alone. God's spirit, which they have received in the new birth enables them to hear and teaches them to understand so that they can please God by believing in Jesus Christ. (**JOH 6:28-29;10:26-28;1CO 2:12-14; ROM 8:5-8**)
 - C. Even someone who is born again, if they only do the work of belief in God, it is of no use in coming to God. In this case, our faith is dead, being alone. (**JAM 2:18-20**)
- III. As a born again, believing child of God, what's the starting point...what must we actually do to come to God?
 - A. It starts with what is preventing us: self. The self must be denied!
 - 1. I exist – One of the First Principles of knowledge. It is the First Fact. Ironically, the first thing we can know is the very thing we must deny. It goes against everything in our sinful nature. (**MAT 16:24-26, LUK 9:23-24**)
 - 2. Self-denial – Our regard for and trust in God today has to be greater than even our regard for life and bodily needs tomorrow. Sufficient enough is the evil we have to deal with today! (**MAT 6:24-25,34**)
 - 3. Self-submission – We have to humble ourselves. (**PSA 34:18;ISA 57:15; JAM 4:7,10**)
 - 4. Self-affliction – We have to do battle with our sinful nature and not give in (good vs. evil). It's spiritual warfare! (**JAM 4:8-9; 2CO 10:4; ROM 12:1-2**)
 - Example: Paul accurately describes this mental affliction he underwent. (**ROM 7:11-15,21-24**)
 - B. It requires us to make His kingdom and His righteousness our first priority. (**MAT 6:33**)
 - 1. Considering our righteousness, we wouldn't call upon Him (**ISA 64:6-8; ROM 3:10-12**)
 - 2. God's kingdom, the church, where He chose to preserve His word is to be sought first for it's where He ordained that we learn about His righteousness. (**1 TIM 3:15; 1PE 2:4-5**)
 - 3. It requires baptism and addition to the membership of a church. This is what it means to

be a Christian. Remember belief is not proof we are coming to God. (**MAR 16:15-16; ACT 2:41;46-47; ACT 11:25-26**)

4. We have to love The LORD with all that is in us, which means obeying His righteous commandments, which is faith in action (**MAT 22:37-38; 1JO 5:3; JAM 2:24,26**)

C. Coming to God requires that any person or thing we desire does not have priority over God and the things he requires of us.

1. Oftentimes we get caught up in what our flesh wants and it supersedes what God wants. That's us seeking things/people we think are best/right for us in disregard to God's word. This is covetousness, which is idolatry. (**EPH 5:5; COL 3:5; 2 TIM 3:1-4**)
Covetousness (OED): 1. Strong or inordinate desire (of). 2. Inordinate and **culpable** [Guilty, criminal; deserving of punishment or condemnation] **desire of possessing that which belongs to another or to which one has no right.**
Idolatry (OED): 1. The worshiping of idols or images made with hands; more generally, the paying or offering of divine honours to any created object. 2. **Immoderate attachment to or veneration for any person or thing**; [EPH 5 referenced]
2. Are we seeking the approval of our spouse or family over God? (**MAT 19:29; LUK 11:27-28; 14:26-27**)
3. Are friends or our biological family more important than our spiritual family? Beware, this might not work out so well! (**MAT 10:21-22; MAR 3:31-35; MIC 7:2-6**).
4. Is there anything we are seeking more than God? (**MAT 6:19-21; MAR 4:18-19; LUK 12:16-21;14:33; 1JO 2:15**).
5. All of this means that in coming to God we have to learn contentment (not being disturbed by wanting more/less), the antidote to covetousness. (**HEB 13:5-6; 1TIM 6:8**)

D. Coming to God must be done with diligence. (**HEB 11:6**)

Diligence (Noah Webster 1828): “Steady application in business of any kind; constant effort to accomplish what is undertaken; exertion of body or mind without unnecessary delay or sloth; due attention; industry; assiduity.”

1. We must be diligent keepers of our hearts and emotions. (**PRO 23:19; 4:23-27**)
Heart: “The seat of the affections and passions, as of love, joy, grief, enmity, courage, pleasure etc.”
 - a. Note: it's important what comes out of your mouth **v.24** (**LUK 6:45, JAM 1:26**)
 - b. Note: the eyes God gave you are the gateway to your soul. Guard them! **v.25** (**PRO 3:7,21; 4:21; 7:2**)
 - c. Note: it requires thinking **before** acting **v.26**
2. We must be diligent to add other works to our work of belief. (**Rom 2:13; 2PE 1:5-10**)
3. We must be intentional about training our affections (**COL 3:1-5; 12-15**)
4. Those whose faith isn't accompanied by diligence are deceived (**JAM 1:22**)
5. Without being diligent to do the works of God, we can't be confident that we even are His adopted children. We have to work out our salvation, not just believe we have it. (**1JN 2:29; PHI 2:12-13**)
6. Coming to God may be of no use even if someone is a born again member of a true church of God who is doing works in addition to their work of belief! In seeking, we must do the works of God with passion and zeal. (**REV 2:2-4; 3:15-16,19**)

E. Coming to God requires knowledge and belief of the reward in seeking Him. (**HEB 11:6**)

1. Knowledge he will be with us and provide for our needs in this life (**PSA 91:11; MAT 6:31-33; PHI 4:19**)
2. Knowledge of His precious promises in the world to come provides peace, comfort, brotherly encouragement in this life in His church. (**PHI 3:13-14; HEB 10:22-25; 2PE 1:3-4; 1TI 4:8; 1JN 2:25, 28-29; COL1:26-2:3, 3:23-25**)
3. This knowledge must be continually renewed (**2PE 1:12-13**)
4. The LORD offers blessing to those who trust in Him, but cursing to those who trust in themselves and others for their reward. (**DEU 30:19-20; Ps 34:8; 40:4; JER 17:5,7,9**)

IV. Coming to God through trials, tribulations, troubles, and tests.

A. God will use trials, tribulations, and troubles to cause us to come to Him (**2CO 12:7-10**)

1. When we are experience troubles, are we self-examining or complaining? It could be God's chastening us to draw us closer to Him. (**PHI 2:14-16; 2CO 13:5; HEB 12:5-8**)

B. God can use tests to prove us and draw us closer to Him.

1. Example: Moses. He had it all! Moses chose to suffer afflictions rather than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. He esteemed the reproach of Christ as greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. (**HEB 11:24-26**)
2. Example: Israel's tests in the wilderness and coming into the promised land represents our journey in coming to God in this life. (**1CO 10:6-11,14; DEU 8:1-20**)
3. The ultimate example: Jesus
 - a. He had perfect faith in God, humbled himself, and did all the works of God flawlessly and completely to the end being cut off from the living and had the greatest reward and exaltation. (**PHI 2:5-11**).
 - b. Jesus did it for us and he's bringing us with Him when he returns! (**COL 3:4**)

C. Are you willing to sacrifice for God? Who's your Eve (sacrifice wife), your Bathsheba/Potipher's wife (sacrifice lust in age digital age of imagery), your Isaac (sacrifice relationships), your money (sacrifice job and things it buys)?

D. Who's your daddy? (**JOS 24:14-15; ECC 11:10-12:1,13-14**)