

DRAWING NEAR TO GOD

By Keith Greer

“But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all Your works.” {Psalm 73:28} What a wonderful sentiment. The sweet psalmist encourages us to “**draw near to God.**” When we draw near to God, we draw:

Away from ourselves. “Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.’” {Matthew 16:24} Can we be pleasing to God when we claim to love Him with all our hearts, souls, and minds but consider ourselves before we do Him? We demonstrate true Christianity when God has first place in our hearts and lives. Paul said it this way, “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” {1 Corinthians 9:27} Every person who desires to “draw near to God” must master, as one of his character traits, humility. “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.” {Romans 12:3}

Away from the world. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” {Romans 12:1,2} This is an absolute must! Drawing near to God automatically causes us to draw away from the world. We cannot serve two masters. {Matthew 6:24} When a person draws nearer to God, he begins to see the world in a different light, and it loses its appeal. Nothing in the world is more important than God. {1 John 2:15-17} We must resist the things of the world, which continually attempt to draw us away from God and back into what we left.

Nearer to one another. “Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.” {Acts 4:32} Unfortunately, some never learn the true strength we can achieve through a closer relationship with other Christians. If I am drawing closer to God, isn’t it a given that I will also draw closer to others who are drawing closer to Him? Our non-Christian friends cannot bring us into a closer fellowship with God; but other Christians can by encouraging and strengthening us. After all, we’re all striving for the same goal and fighting against the same enemy!

Away from doubt and fear. “So He said, ‘Come.’ And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, ‘Lord, save me!’ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’” {Matthew 14:29-31} Peter took his eyes off the Lord and saw the conditions around him; then fear and doubt took over. When we draw closer to God, our doubts, and fear of the things around us, begin to fade away. If I truly understand that God is on my side, what do I have to fear. {Hebrews 13:5,6; Romans 8:28; Matthew

10:28} One who is constantly drawing nearer to God is putting his confidence in the Lord; one of the byproducts is a lessening of our doubts and fears.

Drawing near to God can bring many benefits—both physical and spiritual. God is as close as we want Him to be. Choices we make everyday will lead us in one of two directions—closer to God or farther away from His presence. What about you dear friend, are you drawing nearer to, or further away from, God? It shouldn't be a difficult choice! ***