

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**

SECTION 5 – Intimacy With God

Lesson 15 - Rightly Approaching God

We are going to begin to explore the revelation on rightly approaching God. The Lord will chase people to the ends of the earth to keep them out of hell. But He will not pursue them to the ends of the earth to get them into His throne-room presence. He will only invite them, and make it available. If He demanded that they come into His throne-room presence, and they don't, they would be in rebellion and He would have to judge them.

He commands us to repent of our sin and turn from our wicked ways. As we surrender our life to the Lord Jesus Christ, we are delivered. But He does not demand you to do those things which get you into the throne-room presence of God.

Just because you are a born again Christian does not mean you automatically have access to the Holy of Holies; the throne-room presence of God. God is God, and His secrets are with them that fear Him. That fear dictates how we approach God.

If I was to approach the Queen of England and I wanted an audience with her, I couldn't just walk in and say, "Oh Queenie Baby, what's happening?" and expect to get an audience. She may be gracious and wave hello, but I would not get an official meeting with her. In fact, they have protocol and people that will actually teach you how to greet her, what to call her, how to bow, what to do, what not to do, and all the protocol about meeting the Queen before you can enter her presence.

The same thing is true with the President. When you walk into that Oval Office, and you meet with the President, you call him Mr. President. I don't care if you like who he is. I don't care if he is a democrat, a republican, or an independent. I don't care if you think he is a snake. The office demands respect, and if you want access to that office you better respect that office.

Just as in the natural there is a proper way to approach authority, there is a proper way to approach God; and there are improper ways to approach God. Many people have failed to understand this and have treated God so glibly, as their good, best buddy instead of as Almighty God. He is our best friend, but He is first and foremost the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. He is Almighty God. And until we learn to treat Him as Almighty God, we limit our access to Him. He ain't your little buddy. He ain't your big buddy. He is God Almighty!

He loves you, and there's a tremendous amounts of mercy that He extends to us when we are babes and learning to be sons. But if you want to come into the secret place of The

Most High...if you want to come into the mysteries of God...if you want to come to understand the secrets of God, you better learn how to approach God.

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 5 – Lesson 15

Genesis 4:1-7 *Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD." 2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. 4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. 6 So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."*

God has a very specific way for you to approach Him. Look at the incredible detail that God placed on how they were to approach Him as laid out in the Law; the detail of every single sacrifice; the detail of every single article that was in the Tabernacle, the details of how they were to prepare; how they were to build it; how they are sanctified; how they were to continue it and maintain it; how they were to come before Him; specifically, specifically, specifically what they were to do. All of these things are not just natural. Every single one of these things have a serious significant impact, a serious significant revelation.

What was the difference between Cain & Abel in their approach to God?

Abel came offering the best of what he had, the first fruits, acknowledging he had nothing, and except blood be shed he was guilty of sin. Cain was offering the work of his hands saying, "Look at all my good works."

Abel came offering the best of what he had, offering the first fruits, offering a blood sacrifice, because even back then there was a semblance of understanding that there is no remission of sin except by the shedding of blood. Abel was already acknowledging his sin before God. Abel was acknowledging that he had nothing, and that except blood be shed, that he was guilty of sin.

Cain, on the other hand, was offering the work of his hands. Cain was coming before God and saying, "God, look at all the good that I have to offer you." And God was saying, "Do you understand your sacrifice, your way is not what I want? I don't want

sacrifice. I want obedience." Cain was mad. "Why doesn't God accept me? Why doesn't God accept me?"

There is a right way to approach God, and every bit of it has spiritual, significant importance. There is a right way of approaching God and there is a wrong way of approaching Him. Cain approached Him wrong. God did not accept his sacrifice. If he

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**

SECTION 5 – Lesson 15

approached God right, he would do well, and God would accept him. But if he didn't do well, sin was lying at his door. Cain didn't understand that there is a right way and a wrong way to approach God.

We often have a glib attitude in the church. We think we can come before God any way we want to. "Well, I just praise God the way I like, the way I want to." That is not only ignorant, it is arrogant. Who do we think we are, coming to God and saying, "God I am going to serve You my own way, I'm going to worship You my own way, I'm going to approach You my own way...and You just better accept it,?" That is really what we are saying. It's pride and arrogance. Instead of humbling ourselves before God and saying God, "Show me Your way."

They knew in the Old Testament that there was no proper way to approach God except God's way. Look at Aaron's sons when they brought strange fire to the altar, judgment came. When they tried to approach God their way, judgment came. When David was bringing the ark back to Jerusalem on the cart he was bringing the ark back man's way, not God's way. Then when the oxen began to stumble, Uzziah stuck his hand out and the anger of the Lord struck him dead. David was mad at God until several months later when David went back to the Word of God and discovered that he was doing it completely wrong.

David humbled himself, he repented before God, then prepared the Levites, who were the ones that were supposed to carry the ark on their shoulders. He prepared them. He told them to sanctify themselves. In fact, he took them back to the place where Uzziah died, and reminded them that someone who didn't handle God's glory right died on that very spot. Then they brought the Glory of God back step by step. In fact, so meticulous were they that every six paces they stopped and offered a sacrifice. They were going to approach the glory of God, the presence of God, God's way because God had a specific described way.

It's the presence of God which is the most important thing. The presence of God, getting to His presence, getting close and intimate with His presence.

*You can go into a meeting and feel the presence of God
and never be close to the presence of God.*

You feel the effects of His presence. You feel the radiating ambiance and power of His presence, but never truly get close to Him. We have unsaved people do that all the time. They feel the presence of God. There will be unsaved people that will come to Holy Ghost meetings to feel the presence of God, but are never truly willing to surrender. They are not willing to truly approach Him correctly, so they will never be close to His presence. They will feel it, but they will never get close.

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**
SECTION 5 – Lesson 15

I can be near the presence of a homeless guy, but that doesn't mean I am close to him. I can even shake his hand, but that doesn't mean I am close to him. When I am close to him, I have access to his secrets.

It's the presence of God that this is all about. Everything is about His presence.

Psalms 51:7-11 *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;*

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me hear joy and gladness,

That the bones You have broken may rejoice.

9 Hide Your face from my sins,

And blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,

And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence,

And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

The most important thing to David was the presence of God, not his kingship. That's why David took great pains in approaching God with a right heart and a right spirit. God's presence was everything.

What is the most important ministry that we have?

[The ministry unto God is more important than the ministry to the people.](#)

We have got that totally backwards in our day today. We think that the ministry unto the people is the most important ministry. We may not say it that way, but we act that way. We put the emphasis on that. A lot of preachers say that worship is the key to set the atmosphere so they can do their wonderful preaching. No, it's the ministry unto God. It's the most important ministry. Not the ministry unto the people. I am going to prove it to you right now.

God is about to speak His judgment on the Levites, the priests, the leaders who went astray when Israel went astray, and actually lead God's people down a wrong path. Look at what God says to them.

Ezekiel 44:10-14 *And the Levites who went far from Me, when Israel went astray, who strayed away from Me after their idols, they shall bear their iniquity. 11 Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, as gatekeepers of the house and ministers of the house; they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them. 12 Because they ministered to them before their idols and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity, therefore I have raised My hand in an oath*

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 5 – Lesson 15

against them,” says the Lord GOD, “that they shall bear their iniquity. 13 And they shall not come near Me to minister to Me as priest, nor come near any of My holy things, nor into the Most Holy Place; but they shall bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed. 14 Nevertheless I will make them keep charge of the temple, for all its work, and for all that has to be done in it.

The punishment for the ones who messed up was that they could still minister to the people, but they could not come and minister before God. God considers the greatest ministry available on the earth, the greatest responsibility and honor on the earth to be able to come and minister to Him. The Bible says we are all kings and priests. We need to honor the servants of God, but we have got to stop glorifying those that get to minister to the people and envying their position. You’ve been called to the greatest ministry of all; to the minister unto the Father Himself. God says the ministry to the people is the least. The ministry to God is the greatest.

But we love the praise of the people more than we love the praise of the Father. We love the presence of the people more than we love the presence of the Father. That is why we are willing to change our messages and water down our word. We keep wanting to draw the presence of the people, and God is looking for people who want to draw His presence.

Ezekiel 44:14-16 *Nevertheless I will make them keep charge of the temple, for all its work, and for all that has to be done in it.*

15 “But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood,” says the Lord GOD. 16 “They shall enter My sanctuary, and they shall come near My table to minister to Me, and they shall keep My charge.

God says the ones who didn’t backslide, the ones who kept themselves holy, the ones who stayed pure when everybody else walked away; those are the ones that get to come close to Him. Those are the ones that get to minister to Him.

I’m not just talking about here and now, I’m talking about for all of eternity. There’s going to be many, many, many a preacher, many a Christian worker, many a Christian out there who think they have been doing such a great work for God, but when they get to heaven they are going to be the gatekeepers. Those whose hearts here on the earth have always been to serve God and stay pure before God, and stay holy before God, and stay committed to do the pure work of God, and were not trying to build themselves, build their own ministry, build their own faith, but only acknowledge and exalt and glorify God, will spend eternity at the feet of Jesus. They will have the honor of ministering unto to Him.

Go ahead and rule your nations. Go ahead and rule your cities. Go ahead and be the rulers of countries. I want to spend eternity worshipping at the feet of Jesus, ministering at His throne. That’s what I long for. He said those that kept themselves, that’s the

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course
SECTION 5 – Lesson 15

honor they are going to get. The greatest ministry God clearly laid out here in Ezekiel was the ministry unto Him.

The presence of the Lord is everything.

The focus of the modern church is to draw the people more than His presence. Often they are contrary to one another. If you will get His presence, then Jesus will draw those who truly love Him and want Him and are drawn to Him. He will draw them unto Himself.

In the presence of God, strongholds are destroyed. There is power in the presence of God. Why in the world do we not want His presence? Why don't we focus on and seek His presence? In His presence is the power to destroy strongholds.

Psalms 97:5 *The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD,
At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.*

Psalm 114:7 KJV *Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob*

At the presence of the God of Jacob the earth trembles. When the Bible talks about the end times and talks about earthquakes everywhere, do you know what God spoke to me? He said sin has so polluted the earth and in these end times He is going to be pouring out and manifesting His presence greater than any other time, and the sin in the earth itself will literally react to His presence and the earth itself will tremble at His presence. Some of the end time earthquakes are going to simply be a manifestation of the presence of God coming upon the earth. I can give you scripture after scripture that talks about that.

Jeremiah 4:26 *I beheld, and indeed the fruitful land was a wilderness,
And all its cities were broken down
At the presence of the LORD,
By His fierce anger.*

The presence of God brings judgment and destruction.

Acts 3:19 *Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord*

What comes with the presence of God?

The destruction of strongholds comes with the presence of God. Judgment comes with the presence of God. Times of refreshing comes in the presence of the Lord.

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course
SECTION 5 – Lesson 15

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 *in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power*

The greatest thing, or the worst thing, about hell is it is going to be an eternal separation from the presence of God. It's all about His presence. If you don't have His presence, you don't have anything.

Jesus said where two or three are *truly* gathered together in His name, there He is in the midst of them. Then how is that we can get hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people together and there is no tangible presence of God? The presence of God is everything.

God teaches us throughout the Bible that there are right ways of approaching Him and there are wrong ways of approaching Him. Remember Cain and Able. Able approached God correctly. Cain approached God incorrectly. In our prayer time, in our private time, we often approach God incorrectly. Now He is merciful. He doesn't just slap you around, but He doesn't open up the secret treasures of His heart. He doesn't open up the secret treasures of His inner sanctum, of His Holy of Holies.

If you really look at the Bible you will find that when we gather together it is not about the ministry to the people. It is about ministering to God. As a matter of fact there are only two things we are commanded to do when we gather together on the first of the

week. One is to worship God, and the other is bring God offerings. Never in the Bible does it even say anything about ministering to the people. It says we get together to minister to Him. And if we will make ministering to God our true focus, and come together and minister to Him, then He will come down and minister to us. If we are going to get close to His presence we better learn that there is a right way of approaching God.

For Further Study:

Hebrews 10:22 *let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

Isaiah 29:13 *Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths
And honor Me with their lips,
But have removed their hearts far from Me,
And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men*