

The Approachable Unapproachable God

The Story Behind The Story:

Genesis 14 Hebrews 5:1-10 7:1-3 2 Chronicles 26

The Two Views Of God:

Hebrews 4:14-5:10 Exodus 19 1 Timothy 6:16 Romans 3:23 Philippians 2:1-11

(1) We have a Holy God that we all **fall short of**.

Our Enemy wants us to see God as an
unapproachable being.

(2) God became human so we could approach God:

freely
as ourselves
with confidence
constantly

The Two Truths We Have To Choose From:

Hebrews 4:14-16 Romans 8:12-17 & 35-39 1 John 3:20

(1) The truth of who **we are**, which causes separation from God and **guilt** and **shame**.

(2) The truth of how God **sees us**, which brings relationship with God and **grace** and **mercy**.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 18, 2018

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Who is the most famous celebrity or dignitary you have ever met? Did you have any hesitation or reservations about approaching him or her?

What is something that might have made you less hesitant to approach that person?

2. Chris mentioned that we can come to God confidently just as we are because of what Jesus has done for us. Despite this truth, people still think they need to get their act together before coming to God. Can you think of any things people might feel they need to do to try to make sure they are good enough to be able to approach God?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. We heard that Jesus can empathize with us because he was tempted like we are yet without sin. We can learn a lot about dealing with temptation by observing what Jesus did and by studying how our enemy Satan goes about tempting people. What do you learn from the two passages below about the desires Satan seeks to target when he tempts us?

Genesis 3:1-7 *New International Version (NIV)*

The Fall

¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Matthew 4:1-11 *New International Version (NIV)*

Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

“He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

⁷ Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

What do you notice about Jesus’ response to temptation and the way Adam and Eve responded?

Can you think of any legitimate needs and desires people have that Satan will try to use to tempt them?

2. It can be hard to grasp the reality that God understands our weaknesses and struggles and still invites us to come to him to find mercy and grace whenever we need it. Jesus emphasizes this point in a number of places in the New Testament. How do the following passages help you gain confidence that God really does understand and still invites you into relationship?

Matthew 11:28-30 *New International Version (NIV)*

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, 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.”

John 8:1-11 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹ but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

² At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. ³ The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group ⁴ and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵ In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” ⁶ They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷ When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” ⁸ Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

⁹ At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. ¹⁰ Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

¹¹ “No one, sir,” she said.

“Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”

Do you think that what we heard about God being an approachable God has anything to do with us being approachable to others?

Would you say it’s more important right now for you to focus on God’s approachability or your approachability to others?

3. This weekend Chris emphasized that God invites us to come to him boldly anytime we want. Several other passages in the Bible also talk about us approaching God. What do the following passages tell us about how God desires us to approach him?

Psalm 51:16-17 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁶ You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

¹⁷ My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God, will not despise.

Luke 18:9-14 *New International Version (NIV)*

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

¹³ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

¹⁴ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Ephesians 3:12 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Which of the attitudes mentioned in the passages above do you relate to the most? Which one is most foreign to you?

TAKING IT HOME

1. Chris mentioned two truths that we get to choose from when it comes to approaching God. Can you think of anything you could do that would help you focus more on truth #2?

2. Looking back on this week’s sermon and study, what’s most important for you to remember?

Praise/Prayer Requests:

HOW TO
ENJOY
READING
YOUR BIBLE

Check out this upcoming event! Keith Ferrin, author of *How To Enjoy Reading Your Bible*, will share his relational approach to the Bible and helpful tips that you can start using today.

Date/Time/Location: Fri., Feb. 23, 6:30pm at the Vista Campus in The Edge

Cost: \$5/person. Childcare is available with pre-registration.

Register: Online at northcoastchurch.com/classes