

# Draw Near To God

Small Groups Fall 2008



Welcome!!! We praise God for the beginning of a new year of small groups. We are looking forward to growing closer together and mostly growing closer toward our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Before we begin our new topic, let's begin by praising God for one thing that He has done in your life since the last formal small group in May. If you are new to small groups, perhaps you could share your favorite verse of Scripture and why it is your favorite Scripture.

## INTRODUCTION

Do you ever feel distant from God? What experiences reveal your distance?

I think we all do feel distant at some point. Even David, the Psalmist, (the man after God's own heart), felt distant at times. It must be normal... *BUT*, as we are going to learn, *not excusable!* We are to draw near to God as the Scriptures tell us to.

## What kind of drawing are we talking about?

There is the initial drawing from the Father. Let's read [John 6:44](#) and [John 12:32](#). What do you notice in these verses pertaining to God drawing us?

***James 4:8 ... "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."***

James is writing to fellow brethren. As Christians, we are to draw near to God. The NIV uses the words "*come near to God.*" It is an active verb on our part. We can't expect God to force us to draw us close. We must draw near to God, and then He will draw near to us. This is the kind of drawing we are going to be talking about in these lessons.

## How did Jesus Draw Near?

For this lesson and possibly the next, we are going to study how Jesus drew near to the Father. As with everything in our Christian lives, Jesus is our ultimate example of how we should live. But since Jesus is God, how can He be an example of drawing near to God?

***Read Luke 5:12-16 – Jesus slips away even when there is great need***

Why did Jesus slip away into the wilderness to pray when there were so many needs for the sick to be healed?

Can you think of a time in your life when you needed to slip away to draw near to God, even when there were great demands? What was your response? And what were the results?

***Read Matthew 14:22-23 – Jesus sends the crowds away***

Large crowds were with Jesus and 5000 were fed with just 5 loaves and 2 fish. Jesus performed a miracle by multiplying the bread and fish. But notice what Jesus does immediately after this. He sends His disciples ahead of Him, and then He sends the crowds away. He then went up to the mountain by Himself to pray.

It is important in our lives to always draw ourselves to God, even when we are doing great things in His name. Jesus didn't come primarily to feed the hungry. He came to *do the will of the Father*.

Do you have an example of a time when you were doing something great for God (or in a servant role to others), but then you had a sense you needed to get away from everyone and everything and pray? Did you get away to pray? What was the outcome?

Let's look at it practically... what are your thoughts?

*How does a person draw near to God when they don't know how to talk to Him?*

*How does a mother draw near to God when she is constantly serving her family?*

*How does a child draw near to God when he/she is doing homework all evening?*

*How does a man draw near to God when his life is controlled by others?*

This week in your quiet times with God, think about ways you can come near to God. Ask yourself the question, am I drawing near to God or am I too preoccupied with life?