

Close to God

By David Wright

A Christian invites his neighbor to worship. With a tolerant smile the man replies, “I appreciate the invitation, but I don’t go in for organized religion. I feel closest to God when I’m walking in the woods or sitting on the riverbank.” How does such a response mesh with what the Lord himself has said about being close to God?

Certainly, anyone with open eyes can see evidence of God’s wonderful power everywhere in nature. The author of Psalm 104 prays: “Thou hast made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. [...] O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy creatures. Yonder is the sea, great and wide, which teems with things innumerable, living things both small and great” (vs. 19, 24-25). While the created world is truly beautiful and marvelous, the Bible nowhere even hints that reveling in the creation equals a close relationship with the Creator.

Man is estranged from the Creator by his sin. Isaiah explains that “the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you so that he does not hear” (Isa. 59:1-2). The notion that a mere walk in the woods could mend this estrangement, this broken relationship, trivializes sin.

Our iniquity is so serious that God has sacrificed his own precious Son to atone for it. In him is our only hope for drawing close to God. Jesus is “the way, and the truth, and the life.” No one comes to the Father but through him (John 14:6).

Family Workbox

Some years ago a Christian woman in Alabama had a message to this effect posted in her kitchen: “All your fine compliments and all your good wishes cannot compare with your doing the dishes.” Serving is an expression of love. Show your wife or mom that you love her by helping with a household chore.

[Articles by David Wright](#)
[Meigs Avenue Church of Christ](#)