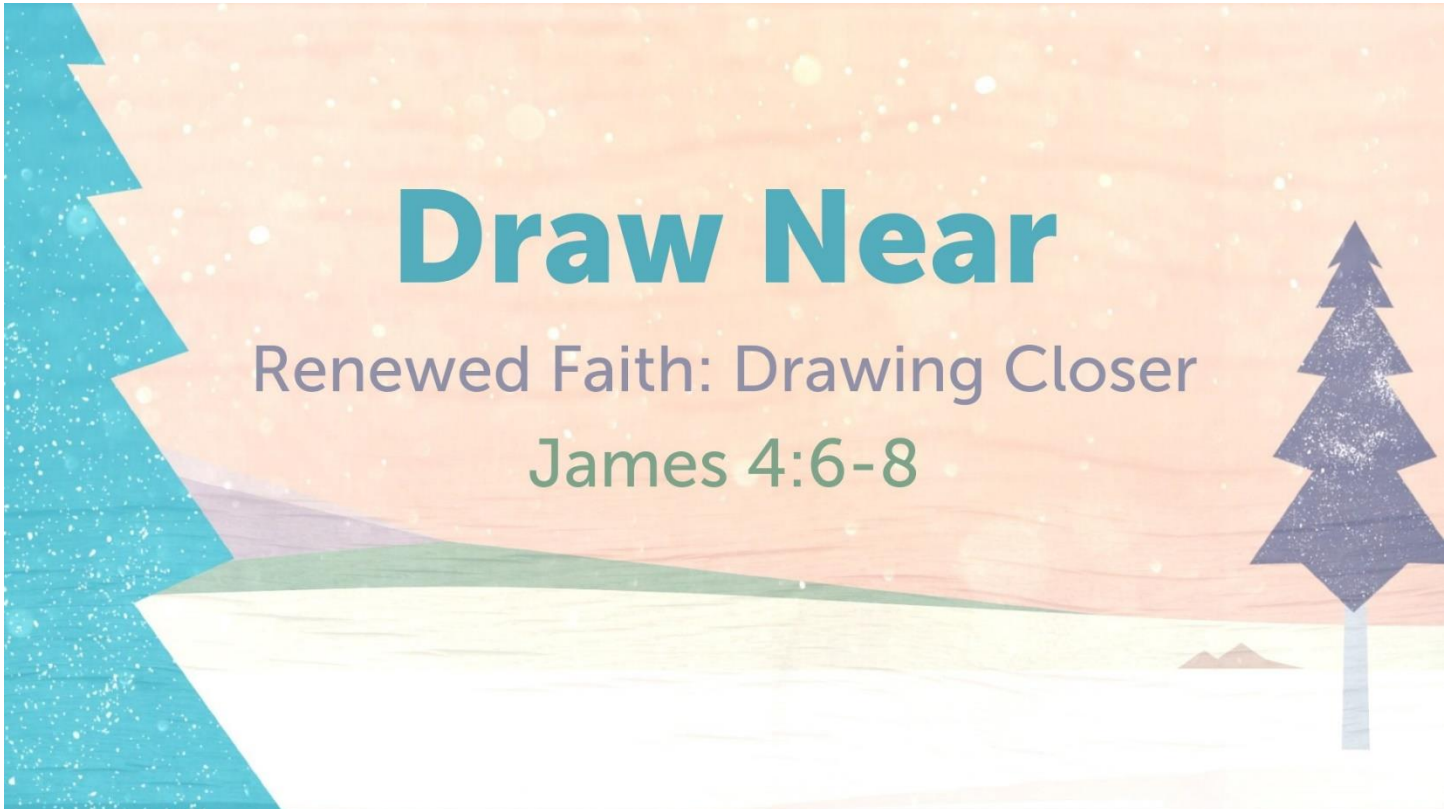


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Renewed Faith: Drawing Closer / Faith; Near / James 4:6-8

Under the old covenant, coming near to God was closely linked with the sacrificial system, but under the new covenant Jesus Christ's sacrifice has given believers free access into God's presence.



James 4:6-8 ESV

⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Drawing near to God under the old covenant

Access to God was restricted

Exodus 24:1-2 ESV

¹ Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. ² Moses alone shall come near to the LORD, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him.”

Priests drew near to God to minister to Him

Ezekiel 44:15 ESV

¹⁵ “But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me. And they shall stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, declares the Lord God.

The people drew near to God to offer worship

Leviticus 15:13-15 ESV

¹³ “And when the one with a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes. And he shall bathe his body in fresh water and shall be clean. ¹⁴ And on the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and come before the LORD to the entrance of the tent of meeting and give them to the priest. ¹⁵ And the priest shall use them, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD for his discharge.

Drawing near to God under the New Covenant

Hebrews 10:19-22 ESV

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw

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near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

God prompts his people to draw near to Him

Isaiah 55:1-3 ESV

¹ “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. ³ Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

Some refuse to draw near to God

Zephaniah 3:2 ESV

² She listens to no voice; she accepts no correction.
She does not trust in the LORD; she does not draw near to her God.

Jeremiah 2:30-31 ESV

³⁰ In vain have I struck your children; they took no correction;
your own sword devoured your prophets like a ravening lion.

³¹ And you, O generation, behold the word of the LORD.
Have I been a wilderness to Israel, or a land of thick darkness?
Why then do my people say, ‘We are free, we will come no more to you’?

All people will ultimately draw near to God

Hosea 3:4-5 ESV

⁴ For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods. ⁵ Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.

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Isaiah 66:22–23 ESV

²² “For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain.

²³ From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD.

God draws near to those who draw near to Him

James 4:8 ESV

⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Hebrews 7:19 ESV

¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

