

Why You Have Constant and Complete Access to God

Our 16-year-old son is saving for his first car. We have a car fund at our house, and we match every dollar that he puts in it. He's working hard to earn money. At this point, it's all work and no benefits but with the hope that one day he will have his car.

Working for something you do not yet have—that is an apt description of Old Covenant living. In the Old Testament, God's people looked forward to what He had promised, but they didn't see it in their own lives. So they constantly worked for what they did not have:

- Holiness. All they had was the law that described what real holiness looked like.
- Forgiveness. They were never free of the guilt from their sin.
- Access to God. Only one person in Israel, the high priest, one day a year was allowed into the holy of holies, where God was.

When Jesus died on the cross, His shed blood inaugurated the New Covenant, in fulfillment of God's promise to His people, as recorded in Jeremiah 31 and quoted in Hebrews 8—a covenant where His people would be given internal power to walk in His ways, complete forgiveness and constant access to intimacy with God.

Sadly, many so-called “Christians” today live more like they're part of the Old Covenant than a partaker in the New Covenant. For example, they want holiness, but are not willing to pay the price for it.

Maybe it's like this for you. In your home, you may have a copy of the Ten Commandments on the wall. “I try to live by

those things,” you say. “I don’t always make it, but I try really hard.” That’s what people in the Old Covenant did, constantly working for what they did not yet have.

But for those of us in Christ, “we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10).

Or what about this: Do you ever think that your pastor has more access to God than you? I’m sure you wouldn’t say that out loud, but maybe you would ask him to pray about something and say, “I am so glad that you are doing this because you have a direct line.”

But so do you—in Christ, you have complete and constant access to God.

Suppose my wife and I decided to give our son a car. He would come home from school one day and see a brand new car in the driveway. But imagine if he didn’t drive it and he was still saving money in his car fund. How foolish would it be to have a new car and not drive it?

It is foolish to work for something that has already been given to you. Old Covenant people lived for what they hoped to have some day; New Covenant people can live from what they already have in Christ—holiness, forgiveness, and access to God. To put it another way, New Covenant people drive the car that has been given to them!

We don’t need the Ten Commandments on our walls anymore, because we have his Spirit expressing the Life of Christ in us and through us. He has made us holy. Hebrews 10:22 encourages us to “draw near to God” because of it. You don’t have to go through your pastor or anyone else to have access to God.

One simple way to draw near is to open the Scriptures and listen. Just say, “Holy Spirit, what do you want to say to me?” Read a verse and just pause. If anything pops into your

head, as long as it aligns with Scripture, assume that's Him talking to you. And as He talks to you, talk back to Him. You can actually get into a conversation with God!

The Old Testament saints would have died for this, and in the New Covenant we have it! Hebrews 10:17-18 says, "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more. And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary." We have unending access to God because Jesus paid for our forgiveness completely on the cross, "once for all" (Heb. 10:10).

So our access to God is uninterrupted into infinity. We are fully forgiven. He has made us holy. Our behavior might not always reflect this reality, but in His grace our behavior does not change it.

Pete Briscoe is the senior pastor of Bent Tree Bible Fellowship in Carrollton, Texas, and a co-host of "Telling the Truth," a Bible-teaching radio program.