

## “HOW TO SEE THE LORD”

**Hebrews 12:12-17**

Message 1625

The Bible informs us, “No man has seen God at any time.” In the book of Exodus when Moses, the Prophet, went up on the mountain to receive the revelation from God, at one point he asked God that he could see Him. But the Lord denied him that privilege. The Lord would not permit Moses to look upon His face. He said, “No man has ever seen God and lived.”

You see, mortal man is not equipped in the present order of existence to see the Lord. We cannot see God now.

The Bible informs us that at a time that is coming, true believers in God will see the Lord. They will see Him face to face. That time will be after this life. To prepare for the experience of seeing the Lord, certain transactions must take place now.

Hebrews 12:12-17 instructs us **HOW TO SEE THE LORD**.

*12. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down and the feeble knees;*

*13. And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*14. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*

*15. Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

*16. Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.*

*17. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

From these verses it is not difficult to construct the **ORDERS** we must follow if we wish to see the Lord.

**STAND UP!** This first order calls us to attention. The writer encourages us to “lift up the hands which hang down.” This might be describing a very tired person, one who is worn out with labor and toil. And so his hands hang limply by his side. It might also describe a lazy person, a person who doesn’t care. He doesn’t have any motive, any drive at all. So he is instructed or ordered to “lift up the hands which hang down.” Stand up!

The next imperative is “strengthen the knees.” These feeble knees may just be weak, perhaps from lack of exercise, perhaps from overwork. Or they may be crippled by birth or some accident. But those feeble knees must be strengthened. He must stand up with strong knees and active hands.

We must be attentive to the Lord and follow this order: stand up!

**WALK STRAIGHT!** This second order calls us to direction. The Bible tells us here to “make straight paths for our feet” so that those who come along will not stumble or be turned out of the way. It is very important, for you and for me to walk a straight walk. The Bible always describes the walk of the righteous

as being a straight walk. Jesus talked about the straight and narrow way that leads to life. So we must walk straight.

When we walk straight, then we follow peace with all men and holiness. Follow peace with all men. Don't be a rabble-rouser, be a peacemaker. Follow peace. Walk a straight path, the straight path of peace with all men. The Bible instructs us in another text that we are to live peaceably with all men, as much as lies within us. We should never be the occasion for trouble.

Then, follow holiness. Follow peace and holiness. That should be a very basic concern for us if we expect to see the Lord, because God is holy and without holiness no man shall see the Lord. You see? Follow holiness. Pursue it. Walk after it. Walk in a straight path so that you will follow peace and holiness.

We must follow this order if we expect to see the Lord: walk straight!

**WATCH OUT!** This third order calls us to inspection. Walk straight. Look diligently! Watch out! There are several reasons why we must do that. We must watch carefully because it is possible to fail of the grace of God. We want to avoid failure. So if we know where the failure may potentially be, we can avoid it. This writer encourages us not to fail of the grace of God.

What does that mean? I think that is when we depend upon ourselves and do not draw upon the grace of God. That can be tragic. It can cause failure. So watch out and avoid failure by depending upon God's grace instead of yourself.

Then watch out to avoid a root of bitterness. A root of bitterness is internal. It happens in the heart. It springs up in the heart. This text refers to "the springing up of a root of bitterness," that it would trouble you and many would be defiled by it. A root of bitterness means unkind thoughts and feelings against someone else.

Avoid being profane. That means evil, thinking more about earthly matters than heavenly matters. Esau was that kind of person. He thought he would die if he did not have something to eat right now. His body was more important to him than his spirit. For a little bite of food he was willing to sell his birthright. That's being a profane person. We must watch out that we do not put more emphasis on the earthly than we do on the heavenly. This can overtake us unless we watch out carefully.

We must, therefore, follow this order if we are to see the Lord: watch out to avoid failure, to avoid a root of bitterness, and to avoid being profane.

While the grace of God is His free gift to us, we are responsible to use that grace so we can reap the benefits. When we realize how abundant God's grace is, we want to do all we can to be faithful so that we can see the Lord.

Thus, to see the Lord we must follow these orders: stand up, walk straight, and watch out. This means we have something to do and to do with diligence if we expect to see the Lord.