
“If I Could Only See God”

Yale philosopher Norwood Russell Hanson once wrote, “Suppose that on next Tuesday morning, just after breakfast, all of us in the one world are knocked to our knees by a percussive and ear shattering thunderclap. Snow swirls; Leaves drop from trees; The earth heaves and buckles; Buildings topple and towers tumble; The sky is ablaze with an eerie, silvery light. Just then, as all the people of this world look up, the heavens open - the clouds pull apart - Revealing an unbelievably immense and radiant Zeus-like figure, towering above us like a hundred Everests. He frowns darkly as lightning plays across the features of His Michelangeloid face. He then points down at me and exclaims, for every man, woman and child to hear, ‘I have had quite enough of your too-clever logic-chopping and word-watching in matters of Theology. Be assured, N. R. Hanson, that I do most certainly exist.’” Hanson adds, “Please do not dismiss this example as a playful, irreverent Disney-oid contrivance. The conceptual point here is that if such a remarkable event were to transpire, I for one should certainly be convinced that God does exist.”

Would seeing the face of God be enough to convince any man or woman to believe in the existence of God? Even if they believed in His existence that would not be enough to make them obedient believers. Numerous times in the Scriptures, signs were asked from God, and they were given. But in spite of that, trust in God was not automatic.

“If I Could Only See God I Would Never Deny Him Again”

At the Transfiguration of Jesus in Matthew 17 Peter, James and John were able to witness Jesus speaking with Moses and Elijah. What an amazing sight! Peter proclaimed the desire to build three tabernacles for the holy three. However, in a voice from heaven, the Father said to Peter and the rest, *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”* (Matt. 17:5b). Did this event of seeing the Transfiguration and hearing the very voice of God

make Peter a giant man of faith? When Jesus was arrested, Peter floundered and even denied that he ever knew Jesus. *“Peter answered and said to Him, ‘Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times. Peter said to Him, ‘Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!’”* And so said all the disciples” (Matt. 26:33-35). No; seeing the Glory of the Son of God with resurrected saints of the Old Testament and hearing the voice of God from Heaven did not mean Peter could never deny the Lord. In fact, he did so THREE times that very night the Lord was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane!

“If I Could Only See God, I Would Stop Giving Excuses”

Few people in the Bible ever had such a close relationship with God as Moses. God even spoke to Moses as a friend speaks to a friend face to face. When God first appeared in the bush He spoke directly to Moses. *“God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am!’”* (Ex. 3:4). God went on to give Moses the responsibility of going and speaking to Pharaoh on behalf of His enslaved people. You would think that would be enough to convince anyone to do what God said and have the confidence to do it. However, Moses gave one excuse after another of why he was not the man for the job.

“If I Could see God I Would be Happy and Always Trust Him”

God sent Moses to Pharaoh to command him to *“Let My people go.”* It took ten deadly plagues to convince Pharaoh to let the slaves go. Even then he had a change of heart and sent his army after them. God rescued His people at the Red Sea when His servant Moses raised the rod of Aaron and the sea was divided. Then they all watched as God destroyed the Egyptians army in the sea. They had seen the mighty hand of God rescue them time and time and time again. Did they trust Him faithfully from that point on? NO! They spent the next forty years grumbling and doubting the God who rescued them from Egyptian bondage.

If I Could only See God, I would Keep His Commandments

God created Adam and Eve. He spoke to them about their duties in the garden. He introduced them in the first wedding ceremony. He warned them about the forbidden tree. He even used to walk and talk with them in the cool of the morning in their Garden of Paradise. Anyone might think that they would keep His commandments without fail. After all, they had been so close to God. However, they did sin by partaking of the forbidden fruit and the rest of course is history (Gen. 3).

Again, *“Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend”* (Ex. 33:22). Being this close to God for many years of faithful service did not keep him from disobeying God to the point that the Lord would not allow him to enter the Promised Land. God had clearly commanded Moses to *“Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals. ...Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod”* (Num. 20:8,11). Seeing God does not guarantee continued faithfulness to God.

“If I Could Only See God, I Would Serve Him Only”

One *“night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, ‘Ask! What shall I give you?’”* (1 Chr. 1:7). Instead of asking for fame and fortune, Solomon asked for wisdom. God was so impressed by his wise choice that He gave the king all three blessings. God had blessed him so greatly you would think that he would remain faithful to God always and never be so foolish as to serve other gods. However, Solomon’s one thousand wives turned his heart to false gods and idol worship. *“So the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the Lord had commanded”* (1 Ki. 11:9,10).

You can See God Every Day

The fact remains that very few have seen God. Scripture is very clear on this matter as the following verses prove:

- “No man hath seen God at any time” (Jn. 1:18; cf. John 6:46)
- “And he said, Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live” (Exodus 33:20)
- “Whom no man hath seen nor can see” (1 Tim. 6:16)

A person does not have to see God or His Son to believe. Thomas doubted that Jesus had indeed resurrected from the dead until he could see Him for himself. “Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed’” (John 20:29).

In a sense everyone can see God every day. We can see Him through His creation. “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. (Ps. 19:1). We can know Him through a daily study of His written Word. God can be clearly reflected in the life of His Son, Jesus Christ. “Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, “Show us the Father”? ‘Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves’” (Jn. 14:9-11).

All Will See God One Day

The most sobering fact of all is: everyone who has ever lived will one day see God. “For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’ So then each of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:10b-12). “And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books” (Rev. 20:12). No one is going to miss out on seeing God in all His glory.

However, it will make no difference if you see

Him and believe on the Day of Judgment. It will be too late to do anything about it. Unless you begin today to see God by becoming and continuing to be a faithful child of God. Jesus promised, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8). Patient and faithful Job believed, “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God” (Job 19:25,26). “Pursue peace with all men, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14).

Do you really want to see God? “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jer. 29:13). God wants you to see Him.

Perhaps another question is in order: Can God see you? Of course, God is all-knowing and all-seeing. But are you too busy for Him? Can God get an appointment with you? No matter how busy you are there are two appointments you will keep: death and judgment. “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). “Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it” (Eccl. 12:7). Listen! It is better to find God now while you are alive than to meet Him face to face at Judgment when you are not prepared to meet Him.

– Daniel R. Vess

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Service Times

Sunday

Bible Study.....9:30 am
Worship Service.....10:30 am
Worship Service.....5:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study.....7:30 pm

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