

Near So Near

*“But now in Christ Jesus
you who previously were far away
have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”*

Ephesians 2:13 (NASB)

In my many years of ministry I have been privileged to travel far from home to places such as Ecuador, Malawi, England, Scotland and Wales. The adventure of being so far away was exciting and I met some wonderful people during my travel adventures.

Now I am confined to home and can say I am content to be in our home 24/7. I am near some of my loved ones and friends and family come for visits regularly.

All of us have had loved ones leave us for heaven and the distance is something we cannot traverse until it is our time to journey from here to heaven ourselves.

When we think of loved ones in heaven, I am reminded of a poem written by Alfred Tennyson in 1835 on the death of his best friend and fiancé of his sister Emilia, Arthur Hallam. Tennyson lamented how the world carried on without a thought of his profound loss. For his world it was business as usual and it troubled him. A verse of his poem written to express his loss goes as follows:

And the stately ships go on

To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch
of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice
that is still!

Scripture teaches us that we begin life far, far from our Creator. We learn from the Bible that the Lord has provided a way for us to draw near to our Maker that is based on the perfect life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We may draw near to our Father in heaven because our Good Shepherd died and rose again to remove our sins and make us suitable to be near to our holy God. Our great claim as Jesus' sheep is that we have been brought near to our Father in heaven.

Only those who desire and long for the presence of their Creator in their lives can truly be called Christians. Reader, are you longing to be near to the Lord? Is He your heart's desire? Read the following hymn and ask yourself if it expresses the desire and joy of your own heart today. I pray it does.

A mind at perfect peace
with God,
Oh! what a word is this!

A sinner reconciled thro' blood;
This, this indeed is peace!

By nature and by practice far,
How very far from God;
Yet now by grace
bro't nigh to Him,
Thro' faith in Jesus' blood.

So near, so very near to God,
Nearer I cannot be;
For in the dear person
of His Son
I'm just as near as He

So dear, so very dear to God,
Dearer I cannot be;
The love wherewith
He loves the Son;
Such is His love to me!

Why should I ever careful be,
Since such a God is mine?
He watches o'er me
night and day,
And tells me "Mine is thine."

Horatio Bonar

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