

DON'T COME AN INCH CLOSER!

Sad to say, this is how some folks act toward God. As David considered the godless people of his day, he exclaimed: “*The fool! He says in his heart: ‘No God!’*” (Psa. 14:1). In our day increasing numbers are taking this attitude.

They don’t want God to interfere with their business. Many a shady deal is excused with the argument that “business is business” and religion doesn’t enter in here. They keep Him out of their social life with the excuse: “We’ve got to have a little fun and relaxation.” They keep Him out of education and say: “Let us think these things out for ourselves,” all the while denying His claims for fair consideration. They keep Him out of politics. You can’t mix religion and politics, you know. Yes, and many keep Him out of religion itself and put all the emphasis upon rites, ceremonies, beads, candlesticks, robes and “good works.” Giving God only lip service, their minds are largely occupied with themselves and their religious works. To God, who seeks only their good—and is able to do them good—they say: “*Don’t come an inch closer!*” Why?

Man, when he first sinned, ran away from God and hid from Him, and he has been doing it ever since. He is afraid of

direct contact with God. And to the Son, whose love for man led Him to die in agony and disgrace to pay for our sins, many still say: “*Don’t come an inch closer!*” They will use that Holy Name in blasphemy or, perhaps, even in some “religious exercise,” but to go to Christ directly, admitting their sins and their need of salvation—they’re afraid to do this.

They even seem afraid of those who would merely *talk* with them about Christ and His saving grace. “Don’t get personal,” they plead, “That’s my own business. Don’t come an inch closer!”

But why try to escape facts? And why put up a barrier against those who want to help you—and *can*? No sinner need fear God unless he rejects Christ, for through Christ God has graciously made full provision for the salvation of sinners. Nor, certainly, need any sinner be afraid of Christ, for God’s Word tells us that “*Christ Jesus came into the world to SAVE sinners*” (I Tim. 1:15). And as for us Christians, why should any sinner fear *us*? We ourselves are only sinners saved by grace. One day we believed the glad message that “*Christ died for our sins*” (I Cor. 15:3) and our lives were revolutionized by it. Now we exclaim with the Apostle Paul: “*He loved ME and gave Himself for ME!*”

So don't say: "*Don't come an inch closer,*" but come to God by faith in Christ and learn the joy and peace of sins forgiven.

"In Christ we have redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7).

"That in the ages to come He [God] might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7).

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and THOU shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

—C. R. Stam

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