

What Makes God Ashamed of Someone?

[Hebrews 11:13-16](#)

Hebrews, Day 41

These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. - Hebrews 11:13-16, ESV

When we were children, we lived for the approval of our parents. Nothing was more devastating than to have our parents look at us as say, with sincere disappointment, "I'm so ashamed of your behavior." And, on the other hand, nothing was so invigorating than to hear them say, "I'm so proud of you!"

In Hebrews 11:16, God declares that He is not ashamed to be called the God of those who have true faith. "Therefore God is not ashamed . . ." Wouldn't it be wonderful to know for certain that God says of you, "I am not ashamed to be called your God!"? Yet it raises another important and related question: What does it take to make God ashamed to be called someone's God? What makes God ashamed to have someone publicly identified as one of His followers?

Of course, theologically speaking, we know this is what's called anthropomorphic language - technically, anthropopathic. God is speaking in human terms, terms we can understand. God Himself is never really ashamed, of course.

Still, in this passage, we seem to have the key to understanding the difference between those who say "Lord, Lord" and hear Jesus say in response, "Depart from me, for I never knew you" ([Matt. 7:21-23](#)) and those to whom Jesus will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" In other words, some professed followers of Jesus will be rejected as frauds, while others will be commended for their faithfulness. What makes the difference?

Those who are commended are those who died in faith, not having received the things promised. Many people would say this describes Abraham and the patriarchs because they did not receive the promised land of Canaan before their deaths. But that interpretation contradicts what Hebrews 11 actually says. "They are seeking a homeland" indeed, but not any earthly one. "They desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one."

True faith in God requires an eternal perspective and looks for a heavenly reward, a heavenly home. True faith in God does not seek to lay up treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. Those who look for earthly gain from "religious devotion" are misguided and lead many others astray, too. (see [1 Tim. 6:3-10](#))

So, what is your heart's desire? Is it to be with the LORD, face-to-face, in glory forever? Or do you crave lesser things, thinking to satisfy your heart with earthly riches and pleasures? Those who look for the heavenly country are those of whom the LORD is not ashamed, those for whom He has prepared an eternal city!