

Breaking Through a Closed Mind

When many Protestants are presented with Biblical arguments for praying to Mary or going to a Catholic Priest for confession they will often dismiss those arguments without consideration and reply, “I just go directly to God.” Even some nominal Catholics will reject sacramental confession because of this misperception.

Some Catholic apologists will attempt to explain secondary mediatorship and how we pray for others while here on earth. This sounds great to the Catholic who is looking to defend his position, but it does little to change the mind of the Protestant who isn't looking to justify Catholic devotion.

On the contrary, the Protestant is still of the mindset:

“Why should I even consider looking at and seriously considering the reasons for defending the Catholic position of praying to Mary, or going to confession to a Priest, etc.? Why should I consider what is at best, second best, when I can go “Directly to God?”

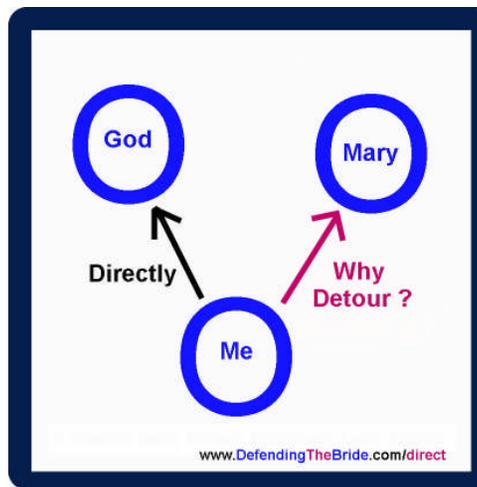
So, the problem is how does the Catholic apologist break through this closed minded response and clarify what it really means to “go directly to God”?

A. Definition : What Does it Mean to Go Directly to God ?

Closed mindedness is one of the biggest obstacles preventing people from considering the claims for Marian devotion, Confession to a Priest, and the

need for a hierarchical Catholic Church. The claim that one can “go directly to God” is often used to justify why one does not need to even consider the reasons or defenses of Catholic teaching. There is the need to explicate that if a person desires a deeper relationship with Christ he needs to discover what is God's desire and what is the path He has built upon which we are to travel to Him.

In worldly experiences we often speak of “going directly to the source” and this usually means to eliminate any middle man.



This worldly analogy does not apply to the supernatural. Going directly to God is more of a spiritual journey than a physical one.

So, “Going to God” involves going to where He truly is, not just to where we imagine Him or want Him to be. Cf. Consider the failed attempts of Charles Taze Russell, David Koresh, or Jim Jones to “go directly to God” etc. And it means going to God the way He wants us to go to Him, and not just assume that our own way is the most direct way.

The break through question:

What can we do with absolute perfection using only the power and grace that we already have of our own ?

Answer: Nothing. The more grace a person has the better he will be able to do that which he attempts. Therefore, the person who attains more grace will be able to go to God more directly than the one who ignores and rejects some of God's grace (all other things being equal.)

A willingness to grow in the virtues of love and humility is essential when one wants to go to God.

So, when a Christian goes to Mary he is already three steps closer to Christ for the following reasons:

1. Because he has moved his own heart in the direction of love
2. He has turned away from the sin of pride and toward the virtue of humility by acknowledging that he needs the help that God wants to give to him through others.
3. He has opened himself up to receive the additional grace that God wants to give to him through Mary and the other Saints, the body of Christ by submitting to His Divine Will.

1 Corinthians 12:21

“The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I do not need you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I do not need you.’” Cf. **1 John 4:20**
Matthew 18:20 , **1 John 4:8**