

Hebrews 10:22b

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[0 : 00] Have you ever had, I'm sure you have, just one of those mornings? I'm having, or have had, been having one of those mornings this morning.

I kind of foolishly, last night, in order to stay up a bit later and study a bit more for this morning, drank Mountain Dew, thinking that'll help get my brain going.

But I'm fairly worthless mentally after dinner. So all it really did is kept me up late. And I have a wife who's 20 weeks pregnant and needs her sleep. And so I sent her off to bed and I took my place on the couch last night and went to bed about midnight.

Woke up at about 5.30 this morning and discovered that our puppy had made quite a mess of herself and our laundry room. So this morning I had to put a puppy in a bathtub and scrub lovely things off of her.

My son is quite sick this morning. I have a 16-month-old at home, kind of wheezing and coughing and just has a nasty, nasty thing going on.

[1 : 04] I sort of threw on clothes this morning, in case you didn't notice. And I'll point out that I'm wearing Argyle socks with my plaid shirt. Because they were the socks in these shoes from the last time I wore them.

It's been quite a morning for me. But I can say it is a privilege to be here with you this morning. I love being with God's people. And with all that going on and the chaos of this morning, it is so good to get to be here with you guys this morning.

God has done a great work amongst us, calling together His church. And there is evidence of that in this room. So it's really, really good to be here.

And I hope you feel the same. We're preaching a bit of time here, kind of on both the vision of Christ Family Church and how that plays itself out.

And I mentioned last week the vision statement of our church, that Christ Family Church exists to experience, proclaim, and display the supremacy of Jesus Christ in all things.

[2 : 09] But how? How is it that we put wheels on that car? How is it that that engine drives us down the road? And we like to use a little analogy to kind of talk about the ministry of our church.

And we use a tree both to talk about the life of our church and our Christian lives as individuals. When we talk about roots, branches, and fruit. The roots being that depth that we have, our knowledge of the Word of God, our theological database, so to speak.

And we want to be both individuals and a group of people that put our roots down very deep. We want to suck out of the Word of God everything that there is for us in it because we believe the Word of God is inspired.

That it is sufficient for our Christian living. And that all we need is found within it. I joked around with the guys last week that I think that God is probably thrifty enough that if all the words in this book were not inspired, He would have left some of them out so we could cut down on our printing costs as we produced it.

I think every word in it is valuable for us, whether you always feel that or not. The branches are our exaltation of Christ, our proclamation of Him, the prayers that we lift up to Him, the songs that we sing together, and then the fruit is the fruit of love.

[3 : 32] Both to the church, the things that we do together to love on each other, and then our fruit to the world, our service and our evangelism to the world. So that's kind of our neat little analogy we like to use.

And as I told you last week in my preparation, I was led to Hebrews chapter 10, and I found contained within it this analogy, but not in quite as neat a form.

So we're just going to preach through Hebrews chapter 10, verse 19 through 25. So let's read that together, and then we'll pray. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh.

And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see today, drawing near.

[4 : 46] Let's pray together. Father, you are a good, loving God, and you have displayed this in the most magnificent way in the work of Christ and in the redemption of your church.

We thank you for that this morning. We thank you for your word, and I pray, Father, this morning that my preparation or lack of, and your word and your spirit will collide this morning, that you will give us ears to hear and understand not only what the text means, but what the text means for us, for our lives.

You'll bring conviction on us as a church and as individuals. Pray, Father, that you will have your way with us this morning. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Alright, so last week, we kind of narrowed in.

We focused in on the beginning of verse 22, but to lead up to that, we've been granted access now to God. 19 through 21, because of the work of Christ, we've been given access to God.

And then we're given three exhortations in the text, and they're all preceded by a little phrase, let us. So you see that, let us, let us, let us, which is where we're at. And last week, we began, the very beginning of verse 22, with a little phrase, let us draw near.

[6 : 09] To talk about Christian worship, when I say that carefully, hear me very carefully, we all worship all the time. Everything you do is an act of worship. What it is you worship is to be determined, but I'm talking about specifically Christian worship.

I'm not talking about when you worship your car wrongly, or a relationship you may have, or how much money you have in the bank account. That's not what I'm discussing. I'm talking about Christian worship, and particularly corporate Christian worship, which is not just the singing of songs, certainly includes the singing of songs, but it's everything that we do together as believers. That's why we call this a worship service, which also includes the preaching of God's word. This is an act of worship. The listening to the preaching of God's word, the prayers we pray together, taking of the Lord's supper together, are all acts of worship.

And so that's what verse 22 really addresses. And as I told you last week, that beginning phrase, let us draw near, is actually one word in the original, which I told you was *proser kamai*, and I was actually corrected.

That's the root of the word, and I'm not even going to try to pronounce the actual word, but the root of the word is *proser kamai*, and we pulled out of that phrase three things we should learn, three things we should know as Christians about proper Christian worship.

[7 : 34] There's a lot of heat without light out there in the world around the idea of worship. Worship battles in churches, and many churches have split over this, primarily music.

Some have accommodated all the crowds in order not to lose anybody. A large local church on their website advertises their services this way. They have three.

A traditional blend of praise and worship. An inspiring and vibrant contemporary worship experience. Contemporary acoustic worship. Take your pick.

Which one of these best suits you and your personality and your preference? Unfortunately, these preferences are primarily, almost always, predicated on opinion.

It's very rare that you have these conversations with people, and they ever go to the scriptures at all. So I asked the question last week, who gets the final say? Who gets to determine how it is that we worship together?

[8 : 39] Is it us? Certainly not. It's God. The scriptures give us a lot of latitude about style. It's not that there is a particular style, a particular inspired liturgy that we must follow.

But there are some particular, there are some things to do that are proper. It scares me that it's possible for us to worship the right God wrongly.

That it's possible for us to even believe by what we're talking about this morning that we're doing it properly and be doing it wrongly. Matthew 15, 8 and 9, Jesus said, This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

In vain do they worship me. This is valuable for us. We pulled three points out last week. I'm going to repeat them for you, and we're going to move on and finish verse 22 this morning with the following three.

So six points total if you're taking notes this morning. Point number one, Christian worship is corporate in emphasis. Let us draw near.

[9 : 51] Our hearts, our bodies. You can see this plural form running through the entire text. It's corporate in emphasis because God's character culminates in the work of Christ.

I said this morning, You are the greatest thing that God has done. It's crazy, isn't it? We are a mess, aren't we? The action that's going on in your Christian life, the culmination of God's work, what is being accomplished in you because of Christ, it's incredible.

The church, in all its disaster, is a great view of God's glory. So Christian worship is corporate in emphasis. Any expression of Christianity devoid of the church is totally foreign to the pages of Scripture.

You remember last week the analogies were given, the metaphors that were a body made of parts, a household of family members, a temple built of living stones.

We're not meant to exist apart from each other, but to coexist as a community of Christians. Psalm 22, the psalmist writes, I will tell of your name to my brothers in the midst of the congregation.

[11 : 12] I will praise you. The second point was Christian worship is frequent in occurrence. That term, that original Greek term was present and active, both that we should be drawing near to God both now and continually.

Forever. Enjoy Him forever. The New Testament does not command a particular frequency. I think asking how often should we meet together is really the wrong question.

I think we ought to want to meet together all the time. Christian worship is, number three, thoroughly preoccupied! with God. Thoroughly preoccupied!

with God. It's His approval that we seek. His applause. Our worship services are for Him. Brothers, we need to be careful that we don't become worshipers of ourselves when we come into this place looking to meet our needs.

We're here to worship God. We're the beneficiaries of what happens as a result. So when you leave here this morning, you ought not to ask, what did I get out of this morning?

[12 : 26] But was God pleased with my participation? So number one, corporate an emphasis. Two, frequent an occurrence. Three, thoroughly preoccupied with God.

This brings us to our new point. Number four, Christian worship includes all of our being. Includes all of our being. We get this from this little phrase with a true heart.

Let us draw near with a true heart. Christianity is a religion of the heart. And you ask, well, then what is the heart?

Are we talking about the muscle that pumps blood throughout my body? Absolutely not. That's not what Scripture means when it refers to the heart. The heart is the center of who we are, the place where our personality and emotions lie.

Essentially, the whole of our interior life. God is not primarily concerned with our outward actions. Do they matter? Are some of them prescribed?

[13 : 31] Yes. But He's not primarily concerned with our outward actions. As we've said, you can do all the right things wrongly. He's primarily concerned with our hearts.

We all tend to know, we're all kind of Christianized in this culture. Don't we? A lot of Christianity around us. And you kind of know the scene.

How many friends do you even have that went through all the motions before they actually were Christians? Before they actually had regenerate hearts?

They went through all the actions. We know exactly what we're supposed to do. We follow every cue to a T. When the crescendo comes in the song, right, what happens?

Close your eyes. Raise your hands. It's the right moment to do that type of thing. If it's not, you always sing standing up. We always sit for preaching. We know when.

[14 : 35] We know. And it feels awkward if nobody tells you what to do. You're like, I'm not sure. I think we're supposed to stand right now, but I'm not really sure. I can't even listen to the first verse

of this song because I'm just not sure if I should stand up or sit down.

It's very frustrating to me. We can do the right things with the wrong heart. It frightens me a lot. A lot.

Turn to Isaiah chapter 1. See what God has to say about this. Isaiah chapter 1. We'll read 11 through 16 to you.

It's God speaking. What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices, says the Lord. I have had enough of burnt offerings, of rams, and the fat of well-fed beef.

I do not delight in the blood of bulls or of lambs or of goats. Let's pause here. These were prescribed things. These were things that God had asked Israel to do.

[15:41] But he's saying, I'm sick of them. I have grown weary of these things. Verse 12. When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts?

Bring no more vain offerings. Incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations. I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly.

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me. I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you.

Even though you make many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves. Make yourselves clean. Let's stop there.

Christianity is a religion of the heart. These are all things that have an ass of Israel to do. And God says, they have become a burden to me.

[16:41] Is our worship together a burden to God? I hope not. I hope not. Recall Simon the magician in Acts chapter 8 went to Peter and tried to purchase the Holy Spirit from him.

He already was a bit of a miracle worker himself. And he saw this spirit and dwelling of Christians and they were healing people and he said, ah, it's a better power than I have now.

I'd like it. And he tried to purchase it and Peter's response to him was, you have neither part nor lot in this matter for your heart is not right before God. So I'll say to you again, Christianity is a religion of the heart.

John Chrysostom said, find the door to your heart and you will discover it is the door to the kingdom of God. In Deuteronomy 4:29 God says, from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart.

It's not all about the outward appearance. Those things matter. But I'm just afraid that we lose sight of what really matters.

[17:54] It comes about the outward appearance and not about our hearts. Many Christians put on airs on Sunday morning.

I'm thankful that we're not a church where I feel pressured to wear a suit to preach in. I know I look pitiful this morning. That outward appearance is so important to so many of us.

What did Jesus call the Pharisees as they acted like that? Whitewashed tombs. Isn't that language? That strong language? You were like whitewashed tombs is what he said to them.

Somebody has on the outside made you look very nice. They have come along and painted you up clean and white. Tomb carved into the rock. But inside you were full of dead people's bones.

What's on the outside is nothing like what's on the inside. Christianity is a religion of the heart. The Psalms are filled with language of the heart.

[19:01] Where the outworking of a heart worshipping God rightly is joy. I don't have time this morning to take you on a survey through the Psalms. But I would invite you to read them looking for those types of things.

The outward working of a heart worshipping God properly is joy. Joy that expresses itself visibly. We're Baptists. We tend to express ourselves visibly too often in our meetings together. Do we? There's dancing in the Psalms.

There's standing and lifting of hands. There's kneeling. There's lying prostrate on the ground. There's actual physical action that comes out of proper hearts.

C.S. Lewis said that in the Psalms God is set on display as the all-satisfying object. Psalm 1611 David wrote In your presence there is fullness of joy.

[20:11] At your right hand are pleasures forevermore. In Psalm 33:1 the psalmist says Shout for joy in the Lord O you righteous. Praise befits the upright.

The upright ought to praise God is what he's saying. Those who are righteous because of Christ will praise God's name joyfully.

Joy is an expressive thing. Is it not? Some of you people look dead when you sing songs. It's expressive. It's easy to look at somebody and say they have no joy in their heart. Isn't it? People would say that of us when we're praising our God. 2 Samuel chapter 6 I think displays this rather well.

If you recall the story David is now king his issues with Saul have been laid to rest at this point and he decides to bring the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem.

[21 : 16] It's been living the Ark has at the house of Abinadab and then there's this little transport that goes on if you recall and there's a little stumble as they're carrying the Ark and one of the bears of the Ark reaches out and touches it to catch it and God gets upset at him and kills him and so David says maybe we shouldn't bring that thing home just yet.

And so it then lives at the house of Obed-Adam for three months and God blesses him richly for housing it there and so David decides okay let's bring it on to Jerusalem now.

In verse 14 says and David danced before the Lord with all his might danced before the Lord with all his might and you recall that David was married to Michal which was Saul's daughter and she saw him from the window and the text says that she despised him with all her heart because she felt that he was disgracing himself I didn't mention that he was pretty much dancing in his underwear but danced with all his might and she confronts him and if you'll allow me a paraphrase his response to her is she says to him you have disgraced your position you were the king of Israel and you're dancing in your underwear in front of the ark it's disgraceful and his response to her in my own paraphrase form is I was holding back you thought that was disgraceful I was holding back I will become even more foolish if it means that my God will receive more glory you ought to be joyful in this place expressive as a result why because our God deserves it I don't really care how you feel you want to dance a little bit or raise your hands and you think that's embarrassing to you what have you become a worshipper of you not a worshipper of our God do you realize what God has done for us we take our sins so lightly most of us probably grew up as fairly moral people probably in Christian homes and haven't done anything really big in our own eyes big sin kind of things any sin is a great affront to God anything you have done you are an enemy of God before Christ set entirely against him your sin is great it does not matter what you think of it God says your sin is great and as such we have a great savior there's joy joy in that David danced for a reason he was celebrating all that God had done for him and for the people of Israel so Christianity is a religion of the heart the way to the heart is through the head the way to the heart is to the head Psalm 51 David wrote behold you delight in truth in the inward being and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart one of my favorite preachers Arturo Azuria I call him Pastor Art to keep it simple said God does not desire empty headed emotionalism neither does he desire empty hearted intellectualism there's a balance there proper

[25 : 05] Christian worship is a marriage of the two so as I say to you our time together our worship together ought to be expressive in joy it ought to be expressive for a reason not just because we're crazy and we have an experience but as it's rooted in truth the value of our worship can be filtered by the truth that supports it we're going to talk about this more next week the value of our Christian worship the legitimacy of it can be measured by the truth that spawns it that creates it that's why we preached you expositionally that is why it's my great burden to just teach you what the text says I believe that's enough I'm fairly young I don't have lots of life experience to share with you anyway but even if I did

I don't really think you need to know about my steps to success I don't think how I arrange my finances are all that important to you as a people the three steps to having a healthier marriage of my life but what the Bible says on those topics is incredibly important to you what God has already pinned for us is what matters most and anything I say that's not just an explanation just a clearer view of what these words are teaching us is totally erroneous you gotta just dismiss it and forget about it altogether John chapter 4 Jesus says that God is seeking those who will worship him in spirit and in truth spirit being our spirits brought into a right relationship into life by the Holy Spirit and in truth which is who

Jesus Christ God's expression of himself through the work of Jesus Christ so we get in this text both the whom and the how of Christian worship so we are directed by the text to draw near to God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ with hearts that are engaged God wants all of us a full head and a warm heart let us draw near with a true heart another way of saying this some of your translations may say with a sincere heart word sincere is a very interesting word again with the

guys last week and we actually talked about this term out of first timothy the english word sincere comes from two latin words sine sera it's interesting to know the story behind these words and how it is that they got put together and i actually added a bit to my knowledge this week in roman times when a pot was created if you've ever been in pottery class you know that when you put the pot in the kiln to be fired there's a chance that it'll crack i don't know if you've experienced that but i took some art classes in high school and was very distraught that i had to redo some of my projects because pots cracked well in this time in order to continue to use these pots they would fill those cracks with wax so this vessel that was created for use would have a flaw in it and they would just fill it up with wax because it would still hold liquid that way if a pot was a perfect pot a pot that didn't have any cracks in it it was stamped on the bottom sine sera which meant literally the terms mean without wax a perfect object a perfect vessel a complete heart is what's being said here all of who we are sine sera to add to that

I got on a site that was debating the origin of the term I think they were wrong on both accounts I think that the pot thing is perfectly fine but they also said that those who sculpted in marble would often fill the cracks the mistakes they had made with wax and so then the marble statue as it was put outside would have flaws as the hot sun began to melt the wax out of that statue and also they postulated that some brick added to the brick was wax what happens to a brick as the wax melts on a building the building loses some of its structure so pick whichever one you like I like the pot one the best that's the origin of that term so a perfect heart a complete heart Psalm 9 1 kind of marries these together as we conclude point 4 Psalmist writes I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart

I will recount all of your wonderful deeds heart and truth combined in one so let us draw near with a true heart number five Christian worship is characterized by confidence let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith full assurance of faith I'll draw your attention back to Hebrews chapter 10 verse 19 where he says therefore brothers since we have confidence to enter the holy places in either the tabernacle or the temple depending on where we are in history there was a place called the holy of holies and it was divided by a great curtain a veil and one time a year through great amounts of ceremony one man was able to enter into the holy of holies into the presence of God and I explained to you last week that this man would have sewn bells into his robes and tied a rope around his ankle just in case he messed something up if they stopped hearing him move inside probably meant that

[31 : 28] God had struck him dead and they could drag him out of the holy of holies even the great high priest did not enter into the presence of God with confidence!

I have no Levitical line I can guarantee you I am a tent of a man that these high priests were and I have confident access not just access but confident access to approach God there was lots of blood shed throughout the Old Testament but none of it granted access to God to the individual if you look back Hebrews chapter 9 verse 22 writer says indeed under the law almost everything is purified with blood and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins so the law made some allowance for sin but blood must be shed in order to forgive it but the bloodshed of animals didn't give us access to God Hebrews chapter 10 verse 3 he elaborates on that and he says but in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins so the sacrifice actually only kept them mindful of their sin now we get to enter with boldness and why because of the blood of

Christ Hebrews 4 16 says let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need what do we get when we draw near what is it that we're going in for mercy and grace not justice but they think God is a just God he absolutely is what has happened to God's justice on our behalf given to Christ Jesus Christ bore the wrath of God for us the due penalty of our sin in verse 20 you'll see that we now have a new and living way a confidence to enter into the holy places by the blood of Jesus by the new and living way and this term new is really rich not the typical Greek term used for new throughout the New Testament it's kind of an abnormal one kind of a rare term used

I'm not going to try to pronounce it this morning it's one of those mornings right the word means freshly as in freshly slaughtered not the typical simple new but through a freshly slaughtered and living way that sacrifice has been made once and for all and it's still that new and living way it's as if that perfect sacrifice has been made right now in this moment and now I can confidently enter in to the presence of God and approach him for mercy and grace because of this new and living way this

sacrifice that has been made on my behalf that was a perfect sacrifice isn't that rich Saturday morning I woke up to another mess with the dog yes you heard me right another mess with the dog it was a bit more tragic

I'll spare you the details of it but my very brave wife ventured in in her socks and and did quite a bit of cleaning and after the fact as her last mode of escape she took off her socks inside out and tossed them on the outside of the laundry room door where my son came and proceeded to go and pick one up and as a father noticing this I freaked probably overreacted a bit and yelled at him did like the game no and he dropped the sock and stuck his little lip out and began to tear up and all at once in this little moment I as I'm mulling over this text in my head I thought about the wrath of God he didn't really know what he was doing obviously but but if that were me the sins the things I've committed against God his wrath I mean it was an overreaction and poor little guy ran away from me but I squatted down and I opened up my arms and I said

[36 : 43] Cain come here and it was so cute he turned around a little pouty and held out his arms like this and ran back to me and and just in a culmination of all those ideas I thought that's the kind of confidence we have isn't it to cry to God Abba Father Daddy we can run into his arms in that way kind of a neat little thing and it reminded me of the story of the prodigal son in Luke chapter 15 much in the same way you see this son who has who has really said for all intents and purposes to his father I want my inheritance now which means I wish you were dead I would prefer to go squander that inheritance than you be alive and he left with his money you don't see the father closed off inside you see him standing out and looking because we know that he sees the son coming from a long way off he was attentive he was waiting for his return and the son didn't think he had the right to approach the father but what do we see the father do he girds up his loins and he runs to meet the son that would have been an atrociously humiliating thing for a man of his stature to do men with money did not run men who could afford golden rings and fine robes and fattened calves did not run people ran for them but not this father he pulls up his robes and he runs to meet the son and he invites him back into the home that is such a beautiful picture of the confidence with which we can approach God because of Christ so beloved we do not come to our king sheepishly but we come to worship him together confidently it doesn't matter what you did this week you are God's son you come together with this church and confidently worship him number six and closely tied

Christian worship is preceded by purification the writer of Hebrews means for us to understand that because of this all the others can be proper it's preceded by purification look at the last part of verse 22 let us draw near with true heart and full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean from the evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water now both of these phrases are hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water are references to some of that ceremonial purification that I mentioned earlier our hearts speak well clean from an evil conscience look at Hebrews chapter 9 11 through 14 the writer says but when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come then through the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands that is not of this creation he entered once for all into the holy places not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood thus securing an eternal redemption for if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer sanctify for the purification of the flesh how much more would the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God what is he talking about all this sprinkling and heifer purify the flesh in those last two verses he's referencing

Numbers chapter 19 where there's instructions given to a person who touched a dead body so in some way was involved in embalming or had a relative who had died somebody who had touched a dead body was considered unclean and couldn't go to the temple as a result and there was a process by which they were purified there was ashes mixed with blood and they were sprinkled with that and then a number of days later they would be purified that's what he's referencing there so if that was for the purification of the flesh how much more would the blood of Christ our great high priest who through eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God purify our conscience from dead works the second phrase our bodies washed with pure water Ezekiel 36 25-26 God writes I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness and from all your idols

I will cleanse you and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh if you are not a regenerate Christian you cannot worship God rightly it is impossible if Christianity is a religion of the heart and you're not a Christian you have a heart of stone it does not matter if you go through all the motions properly it doesn't matter if you look like a Christian it's a matter of the heart so Christian worship is corporate emphasis frequent occurrence thoroughly preoccupied with God includes all of our being characterized by confidence and preceded by purification and it's my prayer and we'll pray in a moment to descend that Christ's Family Church is a church that worships God together rightly