

Worship

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Preacher: Tom Holland

[0:00] It is a joy to be here.

I had a wonderful worship experience yesterday. I attended the funeral of Dr. C.B. Kola, founder of First Wesleyan Church, the man who brought Oklahoma Wesleyan University here.

Under a different name. Indirectly, I suppose, the founder of Wesleyan Christian School, because he started the church that started Wesleyan Christian School. Jan, I know, knew him well, as I did, and some others here. Great man of God. And what a legacy he left.

The center aisle, the center rows of the church were devoted to the family. All 175 of them. And I can't even tell you how many in that family were ministers and evangelists and on staff.

God was well pleased. And I'd be praying for the Kola family and literally what is their celebration. I hope that you have noticed in your bulletin that we have entered into worship as the body of Christ very early.

[1:34] Worship through singing, worship through prayer, and so on. That is, as it should be.

Jonathan asked Don if they could tweak the bulletin a little bit, and Don said, go ahead.

So, give credit where credit is due, and I hope that continues. We are gathered in this place to worship God.

But do we really understand what that means? When the church gathers, as we have this morning and will this evening, do we enter into worship that is both pleasing and acceptable to our Lord?

In a more basic sense, do we really know what worship is? And if we handed out some paper this morning, could we define worship or even the concept of worship?

Because that's what we're about. These, of course, are perplexing questions. They might make us squirm a little.

[2:47] I'm not going to hand out paper, so relax. It would certainly be more uncomfortable if I started inviting folks up here to give us their definition or their answer to some of these questions.

I would never do that because I wouldn't want it done to me. So what is worship? What is the worship that we are supposed to be doing this morning as the church?

Let me say to you first, the most basic definition that I've seen is, worship is giving honor or homage to a higher being.

In our case, it is giving honor to the highest being in the universe, the Almighty God who has revealed Himself to us in an awesome and holy trinity.

We are giving worship to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit as the one true God. Now, I've said a very important word in there.

[4:01] I don't want you to escape your hearing. Worship is giving. Giving. Giving. Worship is a giving experience.

And if you don't hear anything else this morning, hear that. Worship is a giving experience.

Unfortunately, over the last 50 years of life, worship has become predominantly viewed by many people across our land and other parts of the world as a getting.

Well, I'm going to go to church to see what I can get out of the worship service. People leave churches because they say, I didn't get anything out of the worship.

But the truth is, we're not here to get. We are here to give. And what we are giving, or supposed to, is honor to God.

And the beautiful thing is, when we give Him honor, the honor that is due Him, we receive back.

[5:25] We receive back. So there is a sense of a getting. But we're here to give. And let me also say, to worship the true God, it doesn't start at 9.15 or 10.45.

You need to be a worshipping people all the time. But when it is done right, meaning scripturally, there is both a giving and a receiving back.

Now the blueprint for worship is found in John chapter 4. Let me set the stage. Jesus was taking His disciples through Samaria.

Samaria. Now, that doesn't mean a lot to Gentiles living in the 21st century in America, but that was unthinkable in that culture.

A righteous Jew, and especially a rabbi, never did go through Samaria unless there was no alternative.

[6 : 34] Samaria was a land considered by the Jews to be unclean. It was populated by a people who were half Jew, half Gentile, meaning to the righteous Jew, they were not Jews at all.

They were not Jews at all. So why is Jesus in Samaria? Samaria. He was there because He had a divine appointment.

He's the sovereign God. And in an exercise of His sovereignty, He had a divine appointment.

He's going to meet with a woman. Jews didn't do that either, particularly rabbis. But He's going to meet with this woman near the village of Sychar, and that meeting is going to change her life and ours, if you'll let it.

This woman was basically an outcast. She was an outcast. She wasn't even liked by the Samaritans, and she's a Samaritan.

[7 : 47] She had been married five times and was presently living with a man out of wedlock.

Sounds like life in the 21st century. She came to the village water well just on the outskirts of town to draw water for her house.

And there she met the Creator God of the universe. She didn't realize it at the moment, but she would come to realize it. She has a conversation with the Creator.

Can you imagine? And they have a lengthy conversation which culminates in a discussion concerning worship.

She had a heart heavy to know what is true worship and how can I enter into it. Our hearts should be heavy with that question as well.

[8 : 55] Listen to the exchange beginning in verse 20. The woman says, Our fathers worshipped in this mountain. That was Mount Gerizim, by the way. And you people, that's the Jews, you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Jesus said to her woman, Believe me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know for salvation is from the Jews.

And I'm so glad the Lord didn't end there. Listen to what He says next. But an hour is coming and now is.

By the way, we're still in that is. And now is when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

[10 : 06] For such people the Father seeks to be His worshippers. Did you hear that? He is a seeker, God the Father, of true worshippers.

God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. What happens when we worship?

That is probably not a question that we ask often of ourselves or even consider. But let's consider that point.

And you know, we live in a results-oriented society in a results-oriented age. We want to see results when we go do something.

We set out to complete a task and we want to accomplish what we set out to do. In other words, we want to be able to see or to be able to measure the results.

[11 : 11] So what are the results of this church entering into true, legitimate worship? So what should be our results even today as we worship?

If we really engage in the true worship of the true God, what will happen? Because something will happen. And bear in mind that our answer should have results not only for individual believers, but also for our church.

It should impact Highland Park Baptist Church. And true worship that we enter into would also impact the invisible church, the body of Christ spread out around the world made up of true believers.

So what is the result if today we worship God's way, which is in spirit and in truth? The first thing that happens, and if you want to take notes, write this down, the first thing that happens when we

worship God in spirit and in truth is that God God is glorified.

God is glorified. That's why we pay homage to a higher being. To bring glory to God.

[12 : 42] He is glorified when we offer to Him acceptable worship. God said this in the Psalms, Psalm 50, whoever offers praise glorifies Me.

Do you want to be a person who glorifies God? Then measure the praise you give Him not just here, but all week, all year, all your life.

When we praise God, we are bringing glory to His name. When we worship God and when we praise God, He is glorified.

All the way back in Leviticus, part of the Pentateuch that Moses wrote, we read this, God speaking, I will be sanctified in them that come near Me and before all the people I will be glorified.

I will be glorified. We have been called by the Lord to separate ourselves from this dying, sinful world.

[13 : 55] The very word church. Ekklesia means the called out ones or the separated ones. It is God's intention that we be set apart.

What have we been set apart from the rest of the world to do? We are set apart to approach the true God and worship Him.

Worship Him. Our supreme purpose in life is to worship the Lord. That's our supreme purpose. We read this even in the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

What is the chief end of man? To worship God and enjoy Him forever. Forever. What we have said thus far would be enough to justify our existence.

We could end there our true worship glorifies God. That would be enough. But there's more. When we worship God, we are purified.

[15 : 06] We individually. We the church. If the church will engage corporately in true worship, we are purified. the psalmist had this to say, who may ascend into the hill of the Lord or who may stand in His holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart. We come to worship with clean hands and a pure heart. When we take this passage forward to embrace the entire church, a church that does that becomes a pure church.

A pure church. True believers have within them the Spirit of God and He places within us a desire to be pure.

And we fail Him many, many times. And yet we come back to fellowship. That fellowship can even be broken through our sins.

We come back through confession of known sin. And then we strive for further purity. The nearer we come to God, the more our sins are exposed and the more we can deal with them.

[16 : 20] The closer you get to God, you're going to see the cracks and crevices. And you can deal with them through confession. David said, Search me, O God, and know my heart. See if there be any wicked way in me.

And David was like us. There was some. And he would deal with it. And God would give more light to expose additional cracks. And then he would deal with those.

Charles Spurgeon said the same thing in his life. As believers, we need to be in frequent worship with our fellow believers.

believers, it is important that we gather. We gather here on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday, in the fall and winter, Monday night for the men's Bible study.

It is important that we gather together with fellow believers because it not only sanctifies the individual, it is part of the sanctification process for the church as a whole.

[17 : 24] We want to be a church that worships God in spirit and in truth. The church is drawn into worship and into the presence of God through the music and through the message.

We are in God's presence in the preaching of His Word and we come face to face with the reality of our sinfulness. That's important because only then can we deal with that.

we can deal with sins when we come face to face with them. That's God's design. When we come to the Lord's table, we did that recently and we'll be doing it again.

When we come to the Lord's table, that is supposed to be a time of introspection. Often we have the Lord's table on Sunday evening.

Devote Sunday afternoon to looking inward. Make sure the house is clean. And you can mark this thought down.

[18:29] At the communion table, the Lord Jesus uniquely meets with His church through the communion table. And it is there we need to be pure and holy individually.

And when we're all individually that, we are corporately. we are as the church. So when we worship in truth and when we worship God in spirit, God is glorified and we are purified.

Thirdly, when we worship, the church is edified. The church is edified. That is to say that the church is built up or transformed.

transformed. The early church experienced this. And you can read about that in the history, their history in the book of Acts. As they worshiped, they found favor with God.

The elect of God were drawn to them. And just one day, 3,000 were saved. The Scriptures say that the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

[19:40] People joined churches, let's face it, for all kinds of reasons, but the correct methods of joining is when God adds an individual or a family to the church. God gives the increase.

And trust me, God will send His people to a worshiping church. He'll do that. He'll do that. The early church had an impact on the surrounding culture without becoming part of the surrounding culture.

And unfortunately, in our day, we run into that a lot, where the church gets almost homogenized with the surrounding culture.

They touched not only their community, but eventually they turned the world upside down. These little churches that Paul founded and spread throughout the Roman Empire, it changed the world.

Now, Satan has convinced many churches in our day that they need to remain in the building and not touch the surrounding culture. But that was never God's model.

[20:48] We understand that. We've got a group in Colorado right now. We understand that. The word edify, by the way, in the original language, means to be a house builder.

To be a house builder. We are to be emboldened in building up or constructing the church. And that word edify does not mean to feel better.

It means to live better. Please mark that down. It means to live better. It is the Lord who both purges and builds up His church.

We need to remember that. Whether the church is experienced in good times or bad, the Lord is at work in His church. Paul said in the 1 Corinthians letter that all things should be done through edifying, through the building up.

As the church worships in spirit and truth, it is built up. That means it changes. How does it change? It becomes stronger because the worshiping members become stronger individually.

[21:55] And when you have strong individuals, worshiping individuals, you have a strong church. And the opposite is true. The opposite is true also. The church is transformed when individual members are transformed.

True worship changes people. And most of us in here are people. Maybe all of us. True worship changes people.

And if you have not experienced change in your life, go back and examine your worship. Examine yourself. Examine the corporate worship in the church and your individual worship through prayer, Bible study, meditation, and so forth.

How do you spend your week? We're to be a worshiping people. It doesn't end here on the first day of the week. It begins anew on the first day of the week and it continues. Now remember when we started this, I said that true worship was drawing near to God and offering Him homage.

Offering Him what He is due. If you're not being changed by your worship, not growing stronger, not becoming more pure, more sensitive to sin, able to deal with that, then I would submit you may not be worshiping in spirit and truth.

[23:22] Whatever else you may be doing, you may not be involved in true worship. That's a bold statement. It could be interpreted as unkind. So here is what I mean.

If you are truly worshiping, you are literally drawing nigh unto God. Do you understand? You come into the presence of a holy God.

That is a great privilege for Christians. We can come boldly or with confidence according to Hebrews 4 verse 16 boldly into His presence there to seek mercy and grace in our time of need.

And let me tell you, when you come into the presence of God, you never return the same. Okay?

You never return the same. I don't know if you saw this and this isn't in my notes. I'm not even going to charge for this, gentlemen. I can, and I know Brother Ralph is with me on this, I can get aggravated at these television preachers.

[24:32] About five years ago, one of them, and let's be honest, this is on the extreme charismatic side of the house, the extreme side, you know, let's make trees walk, and one of them said, I got called up into heaven Saturday.

And I won't tell you his name, I'm really not going to do that this time, I sometimes do that on Monday night. But he said, when I got to heaven, Jesus was crying. And I went over and I said, Lord, why are you crying?

And Jesus told me, he said, well, I failed. And all these people are going to hell. He said, you haven't failed, we've got everything under control down there. It'll all work out, don't worry, we've got everything under control.

And I was throwing things at the television, you know, I was looking for the remote, I had to change the channel. Within a month, there were probably seven of those guys that had been called up. Why? Because that guy started getting all the money. People started sending him all the money. He went to heaven. Let me tell you something. When you see Jesus face to face, you will be like him.

[25:51] What does that mean? You will be sinless. Because when are you going to see him face to face? Either the rapture or death, which for us is nothing more than a mini rapture.

Instead of taking all of us, he takes one. And we will see him and be like him because we will see him as he is. Those guys came back and they weren't changed.

I would submit they never left. Because when you come into the presence of God, you never return the same.

It would be impossible to come into his presence and leave with no change in your life. Worship, when it is legitimate, changes people and through that same process, changes churches.

So a question that I put out to you today, and don't yell out an answer, just look inward, do we want Highland Park to be changed? Do we want our church to grow?

[26:56] And I'm thinking in terms of spiritual growth. Do we want to get closer to the Lord? I suppose we can throw in even numerically. On the one hand, we must trust God because He gives the increase, but our part is to worship Him in spirit and truth.

He will draw His people to this church if we are involved in legitimate worship. And unless we are worshiping in such a manner, we will not and cannot experience or expect such change.

Worship changes people and it changes churches. Mark this thought down. Lack of worship never propels us into greater acts of obedience.

Okay? Lack of worship will never propel an individual into greater acts of obedience.

The lack of worship has the opposite effect from obedience. True worship brings about a greater commitment to obedience.

[28:11] How can we experience greater obedience if we are not familiar with the commands of the Lord? The answer is we can't. We must know what He expects of us and we find that in the Word of God.

We worship when we enter into the Word of God Sunday morning but in your homes Monday through Saturday. the desire to camp out in the Word of God on a consistent basis is grounded in true worship.

True worship opens up a two-way channel to the Lord. We pray. I trust everybody in here is a praying person. We pray and that is a form of talking to God.

We study the Bible and that is a form of God talking to us. We hear from God through His Word. Do you want to know what true worship will do for you?

Listen to what it did for Moses and believe that it can have the same impact in your life and in mine. In Exodus 33, the Lord spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend.

[29:27] Wow. Wow. I'm not uncomfortable at all in talking to Jonathan or Mike. We do that.

We do that. And I understand that we are to reverence the Lord, but we can also talk to Him on a very intimate level. It is true worship when we do so.

Moses was so involved in true worship that he felt like he was speaking to his friend and yet he caught a glimpse of God's glory as it passed by him.

It was an amazing thing. That has with it an intimacy with the Almighty that many of us may not have ever experienced, but it is available to God's true friends.

Now remember, we're talking about the results of true worship. And do you know what the result was for Moses? The Scriptures say that he bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped.

[30:32] When you come into the presence of God, you don't say, don't worry, we've got everything under control. You bow your head to the earth and you worship.

That was the result. But it didn't end there. After coming that close to God, Moses immediately entered into an intercessory prayer for the sinning brothers and sisters of the Hebrew nation. He was compelled to intercede. Do you intercede for your friends? Do you intercede for family? Do you intercede for this church? Do you intercede for your lost relatives, your lost friends?

Moses was compelled to intercede for sinning brothers. brothers. God responded to Moses telling him he would not forget his covenant relationship with them.

And Moses was changed. True worship changes us. Moses was so changed that he came down off of the mountain and his face shone.

[31:42] It lit up. Some of the glory of God that he had experienced was transferred to Moses. Worship is transforming.

And you may say, but I'm not Moses. My face would never shine like his. But in a sense, you could be wrong or would be wrong when you enter into a pattern of true worship, you will be changed and eventually your family and your friends will notice and they're going to say, what's different about you?

Something has happened. What's different? That may be the first step to them being changed as well. So we've seen three results of true worship.

God is glorified, Christians are purified, and the church is edified. Let me give you a fourth result. The lost are evangelized. The lost are evangelized. Not just the lost which might come in here, but the lost that we encounter out in the world.

[32:56] When the church worships in spirit and truth, the lost will be evangelized. Dr. MacArthur speaks of a Jewish lady who was at her synagogue one Sunday morning meeting with her rabbi.

Now we have to understand something. Sunday at the synagogue is another business day. they gather on Saturday, the Jewish people in the synagogue, so that was his Monday.

That was his Monday for us. And so they gathered and she told her rabbi that she needed counseling because her marriage was falling apart and she wanted to try and salvage it.

Well, he quickly checked her financial records. They were kept by the local synagogue and discovered she had not paid her dues. And that's what they call it.

She had not paid her dues. And he told her, you are required to keep up on your giving to reap the benefits of this local synagogue. And he told her to leave.

[34:02] And she got upset and she left in disgust. This really happened. She found herself on the sidewalk just walking and suddenly she was sort of enveloped in a crowd and they were all walking the same direction so she walked with them.

And much to her surprise, she ended up in a church. A Christian church. And it happened to be Grace Community Church where John MacArthur preaches.

A few weeks later, John baptized her as a new creation in Christ. Now, John has a custom. When he baptizes, everyone up there can speak and give their testimony.

I've heard it many times. So, basically, he got her up there to baptize her and he's all excited. You know, this Jewish lady comes out of Judaism and she's now saved.

So, he hands her the microphone and says, tell the congregation whatever you feel led to. And she says, well, I came in here that day and I don't remember a you said. That's got to be humbling.

[35:09] I don't remember a word you said. In fact, I couldn't even tell you what the sermon was about, but I was absolutely in awe of the joy and the peace and the love that was going on among the people as they worshipped.

She said she had never seen worship like that. In fact, she said, I've never seen anything that came close to that kind of worship. As a result, she became a believer just seeing God's people worshipping.

So, when we worship in spirit and truth, we see results. The results of worship are that God is glorified.

Christians are purified. The church is edified. The lost are evangelized. True worship is vitally important to all of us because God seeks those who worship Him.

He is a seeker of people who want to worship Him in spirit and truth. One of the foundational proofs that you are saved and belong to the Lord is your desire to participate in true worship.

[36 : 34] Your desire to worship. If you desire to enter into true worship of the triune God, there is every reason to believe that God has sought you out for that very reason.

You've been sought. That is why true worship is important. And for now, by now you understand the source of true worship is your salvation.

You do not enter into true worship apart from Christ. It can't be done. Your source of true worship is salvation.

Apart from redemption, you cannot enter into legitimate worship of God. Only those who know Him savingly through the Lord Jesus Christ can worship Him.

The source of our ability to worship is grounded in our salvation. God will worship. Now, who is the object of our worship?

[37 : 37] Well, it's God the Father. It's God the Father. And let me add this. You know, it's ironic. I saw a bumper sticker yesterday that said this. We do not worship a God who is universally the Father of all mankind.

time. You know, the Father of everyone. We have a universal Father. Our specific object of worship is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That eliminates many, many, many false gods that are worshiped on this earth. we worship the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is the object of worship. Well, you mean we don't worship Jesus? Well, yes. He's God. He came to us in human flesh. And we know the sphere of our worship because God is spirit.

We can worship Him at any time at any place. I mean, where is any place in this universe where God's not present? Jonah found that out.

[38 : 54] He's in all places and since He's everywhere, we can worship everywhere. We can even worship everywhere. Kids, you can worship in school. I'm looking around and I don't think we have any public school kids in here right now.

But you can worship in school because God happens to be there. The psalmist spoke of entering into His presence. He has taken up residence in every genuine follower of Christ and therefore we dwell in His presence.

Remember the high priest back in Leviticus 16 that entered into the Holy of Holies? Remember that? You as a believer are walking around with the Holy of Holies inside you.

The Spirit of God lives in you. He has taken up His abode in you. He will never leave you, never forsake you. You can worship Him. You can worship Him at 3 o'clock in the morning when your eyes pop open and it seems like the world is crashing in on you.

And He is especially present when we worship Him in Spirit and Truth as the corporate body for which He died. He died for the church. Now there is a balance here.

[40 : 12] A balance between worshipping Him in Spirit, worshipping Him in truth. We worship Him from the overflow of the Holy Spirit within us and we worship Him based upon the truth of the Word of God.

Christ said, I am truth. He is true truth. How do we prepare our hearts for worship? That's vitally important.

You don't just rush in. You've got to be prepared. How do we prepare? worship. It is the missing jewel of individual and corporate worship.

How do we prepare ourselves to worship? And there is one verse of Scripture that should be written on our hearts, in front of our Bibles.

It is, again, a blueprint for entering into worship. I call it Worship Preparation 101. Everything we have said thus far on true worship is an introduction to our study of this one verse of Scripture.

[41 : 24] Here is how we prepare to worship at all times and in every setting until Jesus comes back. This is how you prepare. Hebrews 10 22.

Let us draw near with a sincere heart and full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Wow. There you have the great blueprint on worship preparation. The vital link between you and true worship is the preparation described in those words.

So how do we prepare that our worship may be sincere and acceptable to God? Step one, draw near. Draw near.

When we come to church, we expect the choir to be prepared and we expect the preacher to be prepared, but the heart of the matter is whether or not we are prepared.

[42 : 37] Are we prepared? The first thing we read is, let us draw near. Beloved, that's a call to worship. God has issued a call to worship.

The time to worship has arrived, so we are to draw near to God in order to worship Him in spirit and in truth. So the next question is just how do we individually draw near to God for worship?

The Holy Spirit provides to us some conditions that must be met for us to draw near to worship God. If we are not doing this, our worship will at best be weak and deficient, at worst non-existent, you may call these checkpoints if you want to.

The first condition or checkpoint is called sincerity. Draw near with a sincere heart. With a sincere heart.

You know, we are coming into the presence of God. Spurgeon once said, of course, he lived under a monarchy, he said, you know, you would never go stand before the King of England and play with a feather.

[43 : 52] How often though do we stand before the living God of the universe and figuratively speaking, play with a feather? You know, we are thinking about the ball game or the British Open or where are we going to go eat?

Do I have enough money to eat or can I conjure someone into buying my lunch? I mean, we think all kinds of things rather than focusing on worship with a sincere heart.

Is our heart fixed on the things of God? Do we worship Him with our whole heart or are we preoccupied with the world? David spoke of a pure heart and a united heart.

Do we give God our undivided attention or do we allow our minds to wander around? We can only draw near to worship when we are sincere about worship from the heart.

So we are to draw near with a true or sincere heart, and then it says in full assurance of faith. That's another step.

[44 : 56] Full assurance of faith. We need to remember these passages are coming to us from the book of Hebrews. These people were in a colossal struggle, breaking with the old covenant and trying to embrace the new covenant.

Some already had, some had not yet done so, and some never would. Some never would. In order to worship, they were being required to break with this old system of ceremonies, sacrifices, symbols, types, pictures.

The old covenant filled with those things was over. The new covenant had come based upon Christ Christ and Calvary and the resurrection. To worship God, they were required and we are required to come in full confidence of the faith being revealed to us in the pages of Scripture, in the pages of the New Testament.

The work system was gone. The ceremony system was gone. Worship is now directly related by faith revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

There's no faith possible apart from the revelation of Christ. They and we must worship in spirit and truth and the truth is revealed in Christ as the way to the Father.

[46 : 26] I'm the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. We're to worship in an acceptable manner and the next condition is having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.

When you come in here this morning, when you come back tonight, sprinkle your hearts from any sin that may be impacting on you. Any sin. And you know what?

That takes a dose of humility. If you ever want to learn how to deal with humility, you need to become a police chief. You apologize for things every day for things you didn't do.

And in fact, when they occurred, you were home asleep. And old Captain Evans, Ron, do you remember John Evans? Great guy. John used to tell me, he said, Chief, that first bite of humble pie tastes horrible, but it all tastes the same after that.

We come with a dose of humility. We come to God knowing we have no business on our own of coming to God. We have hearts that are filled at times with evil, that have sin, and that comes from living in this fallen world.

[47 : 41] Pastor Don said last week, you know, we battle, I think it was on Wednesday night, we battle the human flesh. We live in a fallen world and we battle with our own flesh.

To worship, we need our hearts to be sprinkled with the blood of Christ so that He can remove the evil from our life. And you may say, well, but you know, even then I harbor these bad thoughts or I gossiped this week or I did, you know, whatever.

In Christ, we have been delivered from evil. Positionally, we have been delivered. Practically, we are being delivered. And there's a difference.

The cross delivered us. And it's a humbling experience to know that we don't belong at the throne of grace, but we're there based upon the merits of another.

Someone asked me one time, well, what's my part in salvation? You bring to the Lord a bucket of sins. That's what we give Him. The blood of the Lamb has washed away the sins of genuine believers.

[48:55] You are clean. you have been justified a legal declaration that you're without sin. But then there's another step here.

With our bodies washed with pure water. Wait a minute. We've been made clean. Why do we have to wash?

That's an Oklahoma word for wash. We wash up. I spelled that W-A-R-S-H for years. Our bodies washed with pure water.

Didn't we cover that in point three? No, this is a different washing. Related, but a different washing. Point three was our positional washing. We have been made just before God.

When the Father sees us, He sees His Son. But remember, we live in unredeemed flesh and in a fallen world. Point four is referring to that daily, hour by hour washing so that we remain pure and ready to enter into the worship of the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[50:09] Remember, God is Spirit, and therefore we can worship Him at any time and any place, so we must remain pure and ready to enter into worship.

Prayer is a form of worship, and the Scriptures say be in continual prayer. For me, that is a God consciousness. Always be conscious that you belong to another. You don't belong to this world.

But we pick up daily impurities of sin by which we must be ready to deal with before we can worship. We deal with our daily sins how?

Through confession. Through confession. And that is the process by which the Lord purges our sins from us.

We have been made clean by the cross, but the daily dirt of sin in this life must be dealt with through confession. We are commanded to confess all known sin.

[51:09] We may have to go through that process several times a day. As God brings to our minds the fact that we have sinned, we confess those sins to Him, and He removes them as one removes the dust from the road.

We are going to actually talk about that this evening through the life of a man named Martin Luther. There was a great lesson taught by Jesus in the washing of the feet of the disciples.

You remember that? He washed their feet. Creator God of the universe washed their feet. Peter at first refused. He loved Peter. Of course, he always had something to say.

Generally, it was wrong. Peter at first refused. And then Jesus said, it is required for you to enter into My presence, to God's presence. And then He said, well, wash everything.

That was Peter. And Jesus said, Peter, you've already been made clean. That's salvation. But you've got to get rid of the dust of daily sin.

[52:13] It's got to be washed away. We do that through confession of known sins. And what happens when we do that? Well, it's amazing.

1 John 1 9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

We are told to confess. The Greek word is homologeo. It means that we name the sin. We see our sins as God does through His eyes.

We agree with God that our conduct is sinful and apart from His will for us. Every time we sin, we are to confess that sin and based upon God's faithfulness to His children and based upon His righteousness, He forgives that sin.

And then He takes it a further step. He cleanses us from all unrighteousness. What are those? The sins you and I commit and we don't realize it or don't remember it.

[53:26] He wipes the slate clean. In this manner we remain pure before God, ready to enter into His courts with the worship of praise and thanksgiving.

I believe we should approach God on the basis of 1 John 1 9 daily before any spiritual undertaking. If we ignore the command of Hebrews 22, we will go through the motions but ultimately we will be offering unacceptable worship.

Draw near. If we apply and obey that command, we will experience a freshness and a vigor in our worship that will extend to the corporate worship of this church body and touch this community and the world.

If we want to see change in our life and in the life of our church, we need to apply these biblical standards to our worship. I wonder what would happen to Highland Park Baptist Church if the men and women of this church worshipped in this manner.

Perhaps that's what God hasn't strong. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.