**1. Motivate**

What are some memorable large celebrations you have attended?

* graduations
* professional or college sports events
* Olympic venues
* an inauguration
* evangelistic crusade
* national or international professional conference
* concert by some famous person(s)
* grand opening of some new venue

**2. Transition**

Somehow being there in person with all those other people makes it more memorable.

* More exciting than just seeing it on TV
* The same is true about worship – worshiping alongside others encourages us in our faith

**3. Bible Study**

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/4je9br65> If you don’t have wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your compute from <https://tinyurl.com/m78h8bn6>

3.1 Honoring Jesus

Listen for an opportunity.

Hebrews 10:19-22 (NIV) Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

According to this passage, why can believers enter God's presence with boldness?

* by the blood of Jesus
* by a new living way opened through the curtain
* by the sacrificial offering of His body
* we have a great high priest (the greatest high priest)

How is the "new and living way" superior to the old sacrificial system of worship?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Old sacrificial system | New and living way |
| * sacrificial animals were supposed to be healthy and unblemished, but would never have been perfect
* the sacrifices had to be repeated
* these sacrifices looked forward to the sacrifice of God's Son
 | * Jesus was the perfect sacrifice
* His sacrifice was sufficient, done once and for all
* Jesus' sacrifice culminated God's plan for sin's forgiveness
 |

According to the passage, what are the requirements worshipers must meet to come before God in spiritual worship?

* sincere heart
* full assurance of faith
* hearts sprinkled, cleansed from a guilty conscience
* bodies washed with pure water
* hold unswervingly to the hope we profess

How would we apply having a sincere heart to our approach to worship today?

* coming to worship with the proper attitude
* come with attitude of wanting to focus on God, wanting to praise Him,
* less wanting to impress someone else,
* less wanting to be entertained



What keeps some people from drawing near to God?

* rejection of God, “mad at God”
* unbelief – atheist or agnostic
* afraid they have too much bad in their life
* too busy, to interested in other things (idols)
* they are believers but don’t want to submit to God

How does the knowledge of "hearts sprinkled, cleansed from a guilty conscience" affect our worship?

* no fear in coming into God's presence
* assurance that God sees us as pure, holy, righteous
* confidence that God really wants to receive us into His presence
* when we have confessed, God is pleased to fellowship with us

3.2 Encouraging Others

Listen for responsibilities to others.

Hebrews 10:23-25 (NIV) Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching

According to these verses, how can believers show their concern for one another, demonstrate unity?

* spur one another towards love
* motivate one another to good deeds
* just generally encourage one another
* help each other as we come closer to Christ's return

What are some specific things we could do to show concern in the ways our passage says?

* loving actions to someone else will encourage that same action in response
* specific interest in one another … in our good times, in our struggles
* prayer for one another
* sending cards, notes of assurance of prayer, notes of encouragement
* inviting one another to times of fellowship
* helping someone who has home or auto repair problems
* helping someone with their computer

What do doing these things contribute to more meaningful worship?

* worshiping with one another feels more united
* we experience God's love for us through fellow believers
* selfless giving models what God has done for us, we appreciate it more
* we follow God's plan of using Spiritual Gifts to minister to and edify one another, giving us more reason to be full of praise and worship to God

During the Covid pandemic, we were forced to worship and hear preaching and teaching at a distance using technology. In some cases all it took was a cell phone with Zoom to do this.

Why do you think some people have continued to “attend” in this distance format?

* elderly or people who still suffer from the effects of Covid have struggled to have the strength or stamina to return in person to church
* some are lazy
* too easy to sip coffee, remain in your pajamas and watch
* don’t have to get all ready and get going … just roll out of bed (or not) and turn on the TV

Agree or disagree ?

I can worship God just as well by turning my TV to religious programming as I can by going to church.



Agree:

* they have beautiful music
* there's good preaching
* they help me focus on God

Disagree

* you don't have the same personal relationship with fellow worshipers
* you cannot be sharing, praying with/for them and they for you
* that TV preacher cannot marry/bury you
* he cannot personally minister to you in your time of need
* similarly with the congregation

3.3 Praise and Thanksgiving

Listen for sacrifice.

Hebrews 13:12-15 (NIV) And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. 13 Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. 14 For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. 15 Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name.

Consider the reference to "the city that is to come". It should shape our perspective on daily life and challenges. Sing together: [*This World Is Not My Home*](https://library.timelesstruths.org/music/This_World_Is_Not_My_Home/)

What does it mean to continually offer a "sacrifice of praise" to God? When is it a “sacrifice” to praise God? When does it feel most difficult to praise the Lord?

* when you are sick, feeling lousy
* when things in general, just aren’t going well
* when your child is rebellious
* when you lose a job
* inability to meet bills, obtain health care, properly feed and dress your family
* when tragedy comes our way – loss of life, loss to a natural disaster, sudden calamity

Why is offering the “sacrifice of praise” in these situations important?

* you are declaring that God is sufficient
* you are exercising faith, telling God that you believe He IS able and wants to meet your needs
* you probably don’t *feel* that it is happening, but you are telling God you *know* as fact that He is faithful and sufficient to meet your needs

The passage mentions "the fruit of lips that openly profess his name." What are some specific ways we can "profess his name" in our various life contexts?

* within our families – consider Deuteronomy 6:4-7 (NLT2)
“*Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.*
* when colleagues at work or neighbors share problems they face, promise to pray for them, pray with them
* be ready and willing to share your personal experience even though others disagree – they might disagree with your beliefs, but they cannot deny your personal experience
* have your [15 second testimony](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYef0-dM0lo) ready
* when your church is seeking volunteers for different ministries, be ready to step forward

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

The Starting Place.

* As you think about your own habits related to corporate worship, what are some ways you could grow in your participation in worship?
* Spend time in prayer asking God to show you how you can grow in your participation in worship.

The Growing Place.

* Identify a worship setting that’s different than what you’re used to, perhaps in a cross-cultural setting.
* Invite someone from the group to go with you (outside of your normal worship time) to experience corporate worship in a different way.

The Sowing Place.

* The verses that follow Hebrews 13:15 build on the truth that praise is on the lips of those who confess Jesus.
* Praise, however, is only one mark of worship. Read Hebrews 13:16-19 and discover other evidence of a lifestyle of worship that naturally flow from the heart of a follower of Christ.
* Put these principles into practice this week.

Cryptogram Puzzle

The underground church in the country of Wepu Lizim smuggled these two scraps of paper into our embassy. They were forwarded to us in the diplomatic bag. They are boldly proclaiming their determination to gather weekly to worship. Help us decode the message. Use the key above to fill in the blanks with the letters matching the numbers. Technical help and further Fun Family Activities are available at <https://tinyurl.com/m78h8bn6>