

Introduction to the Lesson

Attending a UNC Men's Basketball game in the month of December has become a family tradition for us. Every year, I reach out to a "contact," find out what seats are selling for which games, and whether or not his "contact," is willing to help us get seats. We start by looking at a calendar, checking out which games are available, negotiating a price, and then figuring out payment. We usually end up buying the same seats from a season-ticket holder, along with a parking pass, and enjoying a pre-Conference game in the section above the ticker-tape electronic-ribbon. The seats are pretty good, but the game is usually late. So, we also get a hotel room, and make an mini-vacation out of it—sometimes even letting Nate miss a day of school to go Christmas shopping on the morning after. It's a wonderful way to have some fun as a family as the excitement of Christmas builds.

But... have you ever "known somebody" who could "get you in...?"
Do you know what I mean?

Have you ever known someone who had the right connections to get you free tickets to an event? Or, even better—do you know someone who has access to box-seats, or private suites and will get you in to enjoy a premium event experience? You know, get you the seats that are climate-controlled... the suites where they bring food to you... the nice parking space, and the season-ticket holder gates?

We always have a blast when we attend UNC games—even when they haven't won... It's even MORE fun when we don't have to go to the effort of finding tickets, paying for seats, renting hotel rooms, and missing responsibilities. When we "know someone" who "gets us in" for free, we feel a sense of privilege, and special status.

How would our worship experience change if we viewed our access into weekly worship services as a privilege that comes with "knowing someone" who paid our way—with His blood?

Primary Scripture

^{NAU} **Hebrews 10:19-25** Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹ and since *we have* a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a [\[a\]](#)sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; ²⁴ and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵ not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Secondary Studies

^{NAU} **John 4:19-26** ¹⁹ The woman *said to Him, "[\[a\]](#)Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." ²¹ Jesus *said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.²³ But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. ²⁴ God is [\[a\]](#)spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵ The woman *said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." ²⁶ Jesus *said to her, "I who speak to you am *He*."

^{NAU} **Hebrews 13:7-9** ⁷ Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the [\[a\]](#)result of their conduct, imitate their faith. ⁸ Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday and today and

forever. ⁹ Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who ^[b]were so occupied were not benefited.

Homiletical Idea (The Textual Truth)

Because Jesus is our Great High Priest, we should worship with confidence, sincerity, purity, and intentionality.

Main Ideas from the Texts (The “Take-Away” Truths)

1. Jesus purchased our access to God the Father with His own sacrifice.
2. We worship God in spirit and truth, instead of ritual and routine.
3. We gather in worship together to encourage one another in our faith.

Practical Applications from the Texts

1. Our good deeds don't get us closer to God—Jesus did it all on the cross.
2. Our worship should begin in our hearts, not with our actions.
3. Our relationship with God is directly connected to our meaningful church attendance.

Objectives for the Lesson

1. Observe how Jesus fulfilled the OT sacrificial system by His own sacrificial death.
2. Acknowledge the differences between worshipping in spirit/truth versus ritual/routine.
3. Connect the importance of local church worship with ones' personal relationship with God.

Lesson Outline

1. We should worship God with Sincerity.
 - a. The OT-prescribed daily sacrificial system of animals and blood WAS NOT enough to forgive sins and free us from the power of death.
 - i. The animal was innocent; the sinner was asking that their animal receive the punishment instead.
 - ii. God accepted that substitution, but it did not accomplish any change in the heart of a person.
 1. A person's heart is desperately wicked, sinful, depraved.
 2. A relationship with God the way He desired it could not happen until the sin in a persons' heart, will, and emotions was defeated.
 - b. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross at Calvary fulfilled all the requirements of mercy and justice.
 - i. Jesus took the punishment for our sins in our place.
 - ii. Jesus rose from the dead so that no other sacrifice will ever be needed.
 - iii. Jesus reunited us with the Father as an older brother.
2. We should worship God with Purity.
 - a. Our free and open access to God cannot be taken lightly.
 - i. God does not entertain our worship, our prayers, or our deeds if we hold onto our old, pre-conversion lifestyle.
 - ii. We diminish what Jesus did on the cross if we don't allow His perfect sacrifice to transform our lives.
 - iii. We diminish God's holiness by expecting Him to tolerate our ongoing sinfulness.
 - b. We respond to Jesus' goodness to us by following Him, by obeying His commands, by surrendering to His Spirits' work in us.
3. We should worship God Corporately.
 - a. Regular worship with the body of Christ is a scriptural command.

- b. Regular worship with the body of Christ should include encouragement—
 - i. Us stimulating, inspiring, encouraging others to walk with Christ
 - ii. Others stimulating, inspiring, encouraging US to walk with Christ
- c. Regular worship with the body of Christ should include instruction—
 - i. Praise to God for His Goodness, to Jesus for His great gift
 - ii. Public reading of scripture (1 Tim)
 - iii. Personal application of God’s word to our lives
 - iv. Prayer for one another (James 5)
- d. Regular worship with the body of Christ should include inspiration—
 - i. A “breath of fresh air” in preparation for the week to come
 - ii. A sense of community with others on a similar journey
 - iii. A reminder, stimulant to walk out our faith through the week.

Teaching Hints and Tips

- Consider our current ideas, conceptions and expectations of our weekly worship experiences.
 - Ask the students if they can recite the normal orders of service...
 - Challenge them to predict the normal flow of a Sunday morning worship service, complete with all the normal activities.
 - Write the order down, and note their perspectives on the purposes of those components of worship.
 - Dig deeper into their perspectives, asking why they think our services are planned and predictable.
- Explore daily routines with the students—
 - Start a conversation about daily routines, especially the mundane and ordinary.
 - Tease apart the differences between routines and rituals;
 - Ask them if they recite a blessing over their meals,
 - And which form of blessing they usually recite.
 - Ask about how those routines and rituals began.
 - Can rituals and routines be meaningful, even if they’re predictable?
 - Can rituals and routines be meaningless, even if they started out otherwise?
- Acknowledge how corporate worship can be a support during good seasons and difficult seasons.
 - Discuss accountability, and how our community of faith can help us stay true to our commitment to Christ during low points.
 - Discuss celebration, and how our community of faith celebrates with us when we accomplish our goals and God moves in our lives.
 - Talk about interpreting scripture, and how our community of faith helps us remain true to the “faith of our fathers,” delivered to us by His word.

Illustrations/Multimedia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTdZDE9451Q>

Michael Jackson Talks to Oprah Live Interview 1993 60FPS
(Start 51:23 – End 53:21)

**This video clip contains a video collage of Michael Jackson concerts from all over the world, and documents all the ways his fans have swooned over him. Much of the footage could have been filmed at major religious events—it’s definitely worship.*

Small Group Questions and Prompts

MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL

What would church be like if people had to wait in line and get tickets to attend a weekly service?
What if lines of people formed and wrapped around the building, just so folks could attend one Sunday morning service?
What makes us treat Sunday worship services differently than a concert, or a sporting event?
Does it matter that we “know someone” who “bought” our access to worship with His own blood?

(Jesus as Mediator/Great High Priest)

Have you ever been afraid to talk to someone? Why?
Have you ever had a friend talk to someone for you? Who was that friend? What did you want them to say for you? Why did you choose them to speak for you? *(Think BF/GF)*
Have you ever been afraid to talk to God?

(Worship)

Worship is one of those words you might hear often at church; could you define, or describe it in your own words? Does worship = singing? Does worship = church attendance?

Based on the Michael Jackson video, what kinds of people/things are worshipped in today’s culture? At your school? In your neighborhood?
Why does God care so much about our worship? (cp. Ps 115:7-9)

(The Significance of Corporate Worship)

How is what we do as a church on Sundays and Wednesdays considered worship?
What does worship have to do with our every-day lives?
Does worship only happen in a sanctuary? Why, or why not?

How might worship change the way you see the world? How might worship help you as you make decisions every day?
Is worshipping with a group of people different than worshipping at home, alone, or with a screen?
What does God say about worshipping with other people in Hebrews 10:25?
How does worshipping with others bring encouragement?