

Closing Thoughts on Worship

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[0 : 00] Amen.

Let's begin with prayer. Father, for us this morning to say let's begin with prayer is not to say that this is the start.

Because this day has been bathed in prayer. Your people rising early to come into your presence with humility and thanksgiving.

Your people driving and praying with expectation for the blessing of this day and corporate worship.

Your people praying as we have sung together of your glory and your mercy. Your people joining now together with me in prayer.

[1 : 30] Recognizing the undeniable and clear truth of Scripture. That apart from your working among us. All that we engage in is futile and worthless.

We are reminded of the words of our Savior who said, From apart from me you can do nothing. And so we pray with expectation.

That the word of God would have free course. And bear fruit. And that those who are here this morning that know the Lord Jesus Christ would have their hearts strengthened.

That their spirit would be lifted. That their eyes would be set upon the glory to come. And those that are here that do not know Christ.

Would be drawn by the certainty of your mercy. And the gloom of judgment. To find hope.

[2 : 34] And forgiveness. And salvation in the finished work. Of Jesus. And we ask this in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen. Well I would like you to turn in your Bibles. To Isaiah chapter 66 verse 22. How many of you have ever stopped to think about the way books end?

Books have to start a certain way. I mean there's a start to a book. And there's an end to a book. And if you were to kind of work your way through the Bible. You would find that there are a number of instances where the ends to various books in the Bible.

Are rather sober or maudlin. You know how Genesis ends? Take a look at it. Bones in Egypt.

How's that? That's encouraging isn't it? And you think about how Malachi ends. End of the Old Testament.

[3 : 48] Pretty sobering. If ends are important. Well certainly the end of the book of Isaiah. And that's where we are this morning.

Is deserving of our thought. And our attention. So let me read verse 22, 23, and 24. And I want you to frame it in your thinking.

For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord. So shall your offspring and your name remain.

From new moon to new moon. And from Sabbath to Sabbath. All flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord. And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me.

For their worms shall not die. Their fire shall not be quenched. And they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh. I found myself kind of pondering hearing Joel Olsteen read the end of Isaiah.

[4 : 58] And thinking to myself, how would that fit into any sermon apart from the clear instruction of the word of God.

That there is more to the message than just sweetness and light. And this morning I want you to think very carefully about how Isaiah closes off this book.

Because it has practical value and application to your life this morning. With Isaiah 66 in your ears, I want you to go to Isaiah 66 verse 1 and 2.

Thus says the Lord, heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. What is the house that you would build for me and what is the place of my rest?

All these things my hand has made. And so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look.

[6 : 15] He who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word. The opening nines that we have read both from the very end of the book of Isaiah and hear from the beginning of the closing chapter are ones that I want to kind of resonate in your heart.

Because what the indication of the text is, is that an appropriate activity for us this morning is to consciously and deliberately think very carefully, am I indeed a worshiper of the living God?

And how will my story end? It's important. As we look at the passage this morning, I want you to recognize that through the book of Isaiah, we have seen this ongoing theme of the mercy of God, but the judgment of God.

In particular, Isaiah written to a very stubborn and rebellious people whose hearts were not at all inclined towards God and warning after warning of the fact that God would indeed deal with sin.

On the other hand, there is the encouragement of knowing that God in His grace and His mercy would lavish upon a people the blessings that they didn't deserve and God would do a work in bringing us salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

[7 : 43] I think it's appropriate that this coming Sunday, next Sunday, Pastor Andrew is going to preach the last message from the book of Isaiah, and then we're going to step into the book of 1 John.

And Isaiah chapter 53 is going to be the frame from which that message comes. So as you are looking at this passage this morning, the question I want you to pose to yourself is this, Am I a true worshiper?

Am I a true worshiper? It's critical. It's essential. Because as we saw in reading the last verses of this book, the story is pretty gloomy for those that don't know Christ and are not true worshipers.

So I want you to think, Am I a true worshiper? Let's get into it by listening to what we find in the very first part of verse 1. Thus says the Lord.

So when Isaiah begins saying something or writing in that way, he is telling us that what is coming is something that is more than just an overview of history or perhaps even an account of a miracle.

[8 : 56] It is something that God is declaring, and it demands our attention and our weight. We need to pay attention. And so as we look at this, it says, Thus says the Lord, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.

God wants us this morning to know his immensity and his majesty. The Bible has many different ways of declaring God's transcendent glory and his immensity.

And the image that we find here in Isaiah 66 is one that takes the heavens and the earth and kind of relegates them to these incidental pieces of his glory. They're not overly significant.

We might think of them as being profound. And yet here we see that they are very small in comparison to the immensity and the glory of God. God, the heavens, a place that he has chosen to reveal himself to a certain degree.

The earth, what he created, his footstool, not all that important. And yet the purpose in bringing this to our attention is this, is we have a tendency to be impressed with size, don't we?

[10:05] Something big strikes us. And here is God saying, listen, I want you to get it in your mind that these things that to you are so profound and so significant, they're really relatively small and insignificant to me.

Let me give you several other illustrations where we find this same comparison being made to drive home the point of God's awesome reality and significance.

Psalms 8, verse 3 and 4. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you care for him?

This morning as I was having prayer, I stopped and I was just taking a moment to kind of think about the significance of prayer. Why in the world would God listen to me? And I kind of pondered that.

And then I stopped and thought, you know what? There are other people here in Columbus that he's listening to as well at the same time. How many of you do well when more than one person is speaking in your ear?

[11:10] You're trying to put it no. And I stopped and thought, here's God listening to me as I'm praying this morning. I know he's listening to Pastor Andrew. He's listening to Pastor David. He's listening to Jack. He's listening to Bob.

He's listening. And I thought, whoa, whoa, whoa. That's all in English. Do you realize that he is listening to people in China as they pray in Chinese? Mandarin, we're right?

Mandarin. Okay. Is Cantonese another dialect? Oh, there we go. He's listening in Cantonese. He's listening to Mandarin. He's listening to Hindi. He's listening to Bengali.

He's listening to Manapuri. He's listening to... You know, God is immense. And here is the psalmist saying, man, I stop and think about God.

And what is man? Who am I? Who am I? I think also of Isaiah chapter 40, verse 12. And you are in the book of Isaiah.

[12:06] So let's turn back just for a moment. And here in Isaiah, again, this picture of the immensity of our God comes to our mind.

Isaiah chapter 40, verse 12. It says, The picture here is of God holding all of the water in the little cup of his hand.

How many of you have ever tried to carry water in the palm of your hand to get it from point A to point B? How much stays in there? Have you ever tried to take it from the sink to the stove?

Instead of getting something out of the drawer, you just, I'll grab a little. And by the time you get over there, what happened? It all leaked through the fingers, right? And it's all the water in the palm of his hand. And then look what it says there.

And he's marked off the heavens with a... How large is a span? Does anybody know how the span is right there? About nine inches.

[13 : 27] Is that a big measurement? All the heavens? I can't help but think about Louis Giglio and his wonderful descriptions of the majesty of the heavens and how large they are.

And yet here, here Isaiah says, our God just kind of stretch it out and yeah, that's a span. That's about nine inches. And here, he enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure, little spoon.

And the weight of the mountains in scales. So when you think about the God that you and I have the privilege of knowing and serving and being in intimate communion with, it does us good to stop and realize just how awesome and how large and how significant he is.

Furthermore, as we look in the passage, going back to Isaiah 66 verse 1, God wants us to know that worship is not about a place. What is the house that you would build for me and what is the place of my rest?

How many of you have found yourself on occasion thinking that the church is tremendously important because it's a place? Growing up, my parents made a great deal out of when we were traveling back and forth from India to America, we went through Italy, we went through Germany, went through England, all different kinds.

[14 : 59] And my parents were absolutely obsessed with seeing to it that we saw all the famous cathedrals in the cities that we were in. I have been in the Basilica in Rome.

In fact, the truth of the matter is, is my brother, Mark, got his head stuck between the balusters. St. Peter was supposedly, there's a tomb down in the center of the Basilica, and he put his little head through there, looked down, and then when he raised up, he got his head stuck.

And so that large, it was buried down below the grave. So it made an echo chamber. And here is my little brother screaming that his head is stuck in St. Peter's Basilica.

We've seen them all. And the idea is that those are holy places, and yet Isaiah tells us, you think that's important?

What makes you think that that place is significant? And the reminder and caution here is this, is that we need to understand that our God is much greater than a place.

[16 : 16] I think about the little argument that Jesus had with the woman at the well, remember? He comes and speaks with her, and she says, well, we believe you worship in such and such a place, and you guys believe, and he says, hey, listen, God is into those who worship him in spirit and in truth.

And I want you to understand this morning that worship is not a place, but it is rather a relationship and communion with the triune God, and it's all about the attitude that we have in our heart.

So let me ask you a question this morning. How big is God in your thinking? How big is your view of God this morning? Where is God in the picture, in the economy and aspect of which you have come here to this place?

So let me kind of have you think with me about this in practical terms. Do you find yourself often circling the drain with anxiety? How many of you know what I mean by circling the drain with anxiety?

Some people are by nature professional worriers. They can do it incessantly, and they can do it about the same things. I mean, they don't get tired doing it.

[17 : 25] And worriers are individuals who really, when they're engaged in their activity, are indicating that they don't have a great deal of confidence in God. He created all things.

He knows your thoughts before you do. He has determined your address. He's determined your lifespan. He's determined your gifting. He's determined whether or not you're going to be fed today.

And here you are fretting about things that, at the end of the day, you really can't change. That tells us what you think about God.

Let me give you another one. Do you find yourself... And what we're doing is talking about what is your view of God. Do you find yourself easily offended and given to unforgiveness?

Check the box if that's the case. Don't do it publicly. Your wife is nudging you anyway. But do you find yourself easily offended and inclined to have an unforgiving spirit? Do you keep on bringing up things that have happened in the past and other people have done to you and kind of refreshing it in your memory?

[18 : 34] I can't believe they said that. I should have said. You get caught in that kind of conversations? Well, let me encourage you to recognize that when you are engaged in that, what you are doing is indicating that the God you know is not very significant or very large.

He's not very powerful. Do you believe that God is just? Evidently not, because you don't think He's taking care of your issues properly. Do you believe that He's concerned with your good?

No, you must not, because you are the one who's engaged in just bringing this all up and hashing it out. So the first thing that we see in Isaiah 66, verse 1 is this.

The God that you and I are in relationship with is awe-inspiring, majestic, and immense. And if God is indeed awesome and glorious, how must true worship be?

Question. We find next three marks of true worship. Three marks of true worship.

[19 : 45] God begins this little short summary by letting us know that He pays particular attention to a kind of individual and a hard attitude.

We tend to pay attention to physical features, don't we? I remember watching, I have to admit it, I don't pay much attention to college basketball until March Madness.

And the other night, as I was watching, the cameraman got stuck behind one of those behemoths that play basketball. A behemoth is, you know, kind of like a Leviathan with legs.

This guy must have been like 8 feet, 10 inches, and weighed like about 500 pounds looking at the camera. It kind of blocked out the screen. The guy should have backed up to get a better picture.

Huge! And I thought to myself, wow, that's big! The fact of the matter is, is we look on the outside and God looks on the inside.

[20 : 43] And we have a tendency to pay attention to what's going on outside, but not think very much about the heart. And God is far more interested in the heart that you have in worship than just the fact that you're present.

I want you to recognize, first of all, that God looks favorably on the humble. Here's what He says there in verse 2. This is the one to whom I will look, he who is humble.

The word is used to identify an individual who has a low opinion and submissive spirit.

Who's not all taken up with himself. You want to talk about a person who's not humble? Here is the way you really find out whether a person is not humble. How easily offended they are and how long they hold on to the offense.

Here's what it says. Yes, God is interested in those who have a humble spirit. I have to put it this way. The truth of the matter is, is that only one person is a hero in your story.

[21 : 56] God is the hero, isn't that right? Do you ever act like it's actually you? You're the one who's miffed or you're the one who's interested in the credit? I got to tell you, I am blown away by VBS already in the spin.

I like that. I walked in this morning and I'm looking at that board, you know, that, what is it, galvanized metal. And I'm trying to figure, what are those things here? And it dawned on me, these are things that I can pick off that and I can put them on my refrigerator.

I mean, that's technology to the extreme. I can remember something without putting in my iPhone. And I forget, I do go to the refrigerator regularly, right? There it is. I like that.

Plan ahead, right? I was talking with someone else who's pretty wrapped up into VBS every year. And this individual commented on, man, there's just a lot of horsepower coming to the table to help with a VBS.

And I like that kind of thinking. You know what? It's like, I don't have to get the credit for it. Let somebody out. It's great. Humble people are very quick to see that other people get the credit.

[23 : 05] They're not always irritated by things not going their way. The other day, Pastor Andrew was talking about the fact that in Columbus, people always honk at stoplights.

So, having heard my pastor say that, I thought I would do a little bit of a survey as to why people honk at stoplights. Now, I'm working not to honk at stoplights. But here's what I discovered was why people are honking at stoplights.

Do you know what stoplights are used for in Columbus? Okay. So, when people are not moving at your rate, do you get irritated with them?

Humble people are not very irritated with things not going their way. The humble people are quicker to listen to what other people think.

Humble people are more interested in what is better for others than what they're getting out of things. It's amazing how often the Bible has things to say about humility.

[24 : 15] And I wonder whether or not it is something that you are conscious and deliberate in pursuing in your own life. Are you an individual who readily recognizes you have an ongoing battle with pride and humility is the remedy and you need to pursue it?

Here's what the Scriptures say. God pays attention to the humble heart. Secondly, God looks favorably on those who are contrite.

Contrite. The word contrite that is used here in the Scripture is not one that we use commonly. How many times do you have somebody in your family say, you really have a contrite spirit?

Anybody here? Contrite. Contrite. And we're wondering, what is contrite? Well, let me give you a little picture from 2 Samuel 4, verse 4.

Mephibosheth. Does anybody know who Mephibosheth was? Okay. He was Jonathan's son. Let me tell you one of the distinguishing features of Mephibosheth. I won't say that word again.

[25 : 35] Just trust me. It's in the Bible. This guy. In the future that you think to yourself, pastor couldn't say that name. Just let it go. Okay.

He was crippled in both feet. He was crippled. That's the same Hebrew word that's used for contrite. It's talking about a guy who is deficient and crippled and can't get around very well.

Who is the one that God looks at? The person who is weak and is crippled and is fairly well persuaded that in and of himself, he's not that significant and he's not entirely capable.

That's rather interesting, isn't it, that God looks for people who are not all that impressed with themselves, who are not caught up in their own abilities or their own righteousness.

I love the way that God helps Job deal with his sense of self-righteousness and worth. Job's a good guy, but how does that argument go? Remember Job's friends come and say, you've got to be a sinner.

[26 : 45] You're a low life and I'm sure there's something you've done. God's trying to get your attention and Job's, no, no, no, no, no. And so when God shows up on the scene, what does God do? He only deals with peanut issues.

Do you got me? In the scriptures, it talks about creation being the work of his fingers. Do you know what salvation is? It's when God bears his mighty right arm and shows power.

Creation's peanuts. And so in Job chapter 38 through 40, we find God just kind of beginning to ask Job a couple little easy questions. You know, this is like starting quiz questions.

A little brain teaser here. So where were you when I did this and I did that? And how does that go for Job? Job. He ends up saying, I'm at the point where I'm going to keep my mouth shut.

You ever been there? And then as God continues the argument, he says, I've heard of you with the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you. So I wonder whether or not this morning, remember this, here's the kind of person that God looks at.

[27 : 56] The person who recognizes their deficiencies and is ready to accept them and understand that they are entirely dependent upon God. Another perfect illustration of that would be in 2 Corinthians chapter 12 where the apostle Paul, because of the blessings that he had received, how many of you think you're really blessed and that's the reason you're having problems?

Smile at me because you know that's you, right? I'm blessed. And God gave me proportionate problems to help me with my natural tendency towards what? Profound humility and thankfulness.

That's just, I'm all about that. I'm good with that. You know, it's like, no, God brings heartache and difficulty and challenge and brokenness into my life. And here is Paul. And he goes to the Lord three times.

He says, you know what? If you take away this problem that I have, I could really up my game as an apostle. I write another book or two for you.

I mean, I could plant about four or five more churches if I wasn't here. And here is Paul kind of asking for some kind of remedy for his struggling and his thorn in the flesh.

[29 : 07] And what does God say? My strength is made perfect in weakness. And Paul turns around and he says, you know what?

I will glory in those things because they bring about an understanding of the sufficiency and the grace of God in my life and the lives of other people. So in practical terms, as we think about what is an indication of a contrite spirit, I would have to tell you that probably one of the clearest indicators of a genuinely contrite spirit is the prayer life that you have.

We only pray for things that we really think we need help on. Am I right? Huh?

When you've got it down, it's good, it's easy. I was praying for Atticus this morning. I'm proud of you, Atticus. Just start again. Don't worry about it. Keep hammering out. You pray for people when they need help.

Am I right? I hope you're praying for me. Okay? We pray when we're having trouble. We pray when we can't pull it off ourself. We pray when we're broken and we don't know how to fix it.

[30 : 22] And here is the truth of our God. He is looking for that kind of person. There's a third thing.

God looks favorably on those who tremble at his word. Now stop and be honest with yourself here. When was the last time you trembled at his word?

Church is a place that we can come and sit. I mean, we brush our teeth. We take a shower. There are a lot of things that are pretty decent on the outside. But here's what God is looking for.

He's not as interested in our hygiene as he is in our heart. So when was the last time you trembled at his word? Let's think through how this word is used in the Scripture, then apply it practically in our own lives.

Trembling happens for a variety of reasons in human beings. We may find ourselves trembling because of extreme emotion. Or we may find ourselves trembling because of extreme fright.

[31 : 43] I have a little dog that every day when I come home, she goes into apoplexy with my presence.

I mean, it's only good for about five or six seconds and she's done her thing and after that it's ho-hum back to the couch. But that's the way she is. Okay. So, let's think about this trembling that comes from being scared spitless.

I love this passage. Isaiah, I'm sorry, Genesis chapter 27 verse 33. Here is Isaac who fully intends to bless who? Who does he want to bless?

He wants to bless Esau. What had God already explained to Isaac and his wife about who was going to be blessed? I mean, it was no surprise.

God had said, Jacob is going to be the one who is blessed, right? The younger is going to be the one who is given ascendant place. And so, here's Isaac, decides he's going to steal a march on God and decides, I'm going to go ahead.

[32 : 50] I happen to like Cain. Not Cain. I like Esau. And so, I'm going to bless him anyway. I don't care what God says. I'm blessing him. Now, we don't want to commend the wife for her sneakiness, but, you know, Jacob gets blessed.

Esau shows up late, and here's what happened when Esau reveals to himself that Isaac has actually blessed his younger brother. Do you know what Isaac does?

He begins to tremble. He begins to tremble because he is terrified at the reality of who he has been messing with and what God has done despite his best laid plans.

Another picture of trembling is over in Exodus chapter 20. You remember when God gave the law to the nation of Israel, he displayed himself in thunder and flashes of lightning.

And I love that little passage where the people say to Moses, I mean, they're trembling. They're scared spitless. They're literally quaking in their boots and, well, in their sandals.

[34 : 04] And so, here is the nation petrified at the revelation of the reality of God's word to them. And they say, Moses, would you talk to him?

You know, you talk to him because we'd rather listen to what you have. It's scaring us. Here's another one. In Acts chapter 7, it says that Moses trembled when he drew near the burning bush and heard God speak.

So, I would say it this way, to tremble at his word is to take his word personally and seriously.

There are some of you that are sitting here this morning that for the reality of it, you really have no fear of God's word. It shows up on the way you act.

It shows up in bitterness and unforgiveness. It shows up in indulgence and immorality.

[35 : 09] It shows up in an unwillingness to repent despite his gentle promptings to the contrary. In every point where you display a lack of holy reverence and fear for the word of God, you are indicating that you really don't tremble at his word.

It's a fair question for me to ask myself, do I tremble at his word? And it's a fair question for you to ask yourself, do I take him seriously?

We tremble when we take his word seriously, but we also tremble when we are overwhelmed with pleasure in him.

His word is the vehicle whereby we learn of him and grow to know and love him. And his word is a delight to us. I want you to turn to one of my many favorite verses.

1 Peter 1, verse 8. 1 Peter 1, verse 9.

[36 : 42] Peter uses this passage to identify the emotional makeup of a believer.

And I have to tell you that the word tremble is not in the passage. But I cannot imagine the verse, at least the way I'm wired, without having a sense of a series of cold chills going through my body and a tingling.

I mean, this morning as we were singing, John, where are you? You're back there somewhere. Do you watch me being emotional every now and then? Does it throw you off? It's the way it is. You know, Michelle, I mean, you know, Marsha.

My emotions get the best of me. Somebody move the Kleenex. They're supposed to be right here. Okay. That's the way I'm wired. But, I mean, let me read the passage again.

Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory. When was the last time that in your devotional life and in your prayer life you found yourself so overwhelmed with the sweetness of emotion at the reality of communion with the triune God that you just couldn't contain yourself?

[38 : 11] Huh? God pays attention. I wonder how often when we're singing, do you find yourself just caught up with the beauty of his word and the privilege of expression?

How often in prayer do you just kind of revel in the fact that the God of this universe, who is the creator and sustainer of all things, has his ear bent to hear your plea?

How often when you find yourself overwhelmed with the baggage and heartache of life and ministry, do you recognize that he cares about these things more than you do?

And in the reality of the God that you and I know, does your soul just thrill and your body literally begin to kind of react physically?

I close with coming to the dangerous word of preaching. The end of all things.

[39 : 28] I'm going to do something that is a little atypical for me and we're going to cover verses 3 through 24 and some of you are thinking, I've never seen pastor do that in the five remaining minutes.

Just watch. I'm going to work. I'm going to work. I'm going to push these verses together and summarize the close of the book.

You see, what we've already recognized is the God of this universe, the creator and sustainer of all life, who's the Lord and maker and judge, cares deeply about our hearts.

That's what we've seen. He pays attention to true worship, and he pays attention to faults, and he despises it. In the flow of Isaiah 66, we found that statement made here that false worship is something that is just highly offensive to him.

And we think that we can engage in our secret idolatries and our immoralities and our covetousness and bitterness, and that he really isn't affected by it. He is.

[40 : 35] Just as certain as God takes pleasure in genuine worship, he is as offended by that which is false.

Listen to what we find there in verse 3 and 4. He who slaughters an ox like one who kills a man. He who sacrifices a lamb like one who breaks a dog's neck.

He who presents a grain offering like one who offers pig's blood. He who makes a memorial offering of frankincense like one who blesses an idol.

What's being described here is people who are going through the motions on the outside, but whose heart is far away from God.

Thankfully, that's not all that God has to say here, because as we saw at the very end of the book, God talks about the way things are going to end, and I love what we find there at the end of verse 23.

[41 : 39] It says, All flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord. All flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord. So let me ask you this practical question as I close.

Will you be the one, will you be one, rather, who worships forever in his presence and enjoys the new heavens and the new earth, or will you be one who suffers for all eternity because of your conscious and deliberate choice to refuse the offer of salvation and hope through the Lord Jesus Christ?

That's the way Isaiah ends. It's a book that talks about God dealing with sin, and it's a book that talks about God in his infinite kindness and mercy offering to us hope of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so I put it on the table for you who are sitting here this morning. The truth of the matter is this, is that when the story's over, you will either spend eternity in heaven, enjoying his presence and worshipping him with joy and adoration and complete satisfaction, or you will spend eternity in hell, persisting in your rebellion, angry with God, bitter at every thought of him in your past.

And if you think it has been miserable to lie in bed at night with a gloomy spirit now, nothing will compare with the heartache of eternity.

[43 : 16] And so on the basis of the sure mercies of God, here is my undeniable plea to you. Today, now, is the time of salvation.

Do you know what Scripture says? Call upon the Lord while he may be found. And I would plead with you this morning that in the face of the reality, the certainty of the God who is the controller and sustainer of this universe, the day of judgment is coming, and don't delay.

Plead with him and confess and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's close in prayer. Our Father God, this morning, as we recognize the truth that Isaiah has for us, we're thankful that you're a God who has a tender spirit towards your creation.

That as we saw last week, you take no pleasure in the death of the wicked. And Lord, I am confident that there are those here this morning that know the Lord Jesus Christ that need their heart comforted to know that you're paying attention to their heartache and you love them and you're actively at work and help them not to despair in that struggle.

Help them to think with hope and anticipation, resting in the certainty of your unchanging love.

[44 : 42] And I would plead with you, Father, this morning that you would bring repentance, confession, and salvation to those that are here that do not loathe the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let them not leave this place without conviction and being drawn to the cross. And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.