

Hebrews 10:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Building on the foundation of Christ's priestly work (verses 19-21), the author now issues the first of three exhortations (draw near, hold fast, consider). "Let us draw near" (*prosercōmetha*, προσερχόμεθα) is a present subjunctive expressing ongoing action—let us continually draw near, habitually approach God. This verb was used of priests approaching the altar; now all believers are invited to approach God's throne directly.

We draw near "with a true heart" (*meta alēthinēs kardias*, μετὰ ἀληθινῆς καρδίας) —genuine, sincere, authentic faith, not hypocrisy or pretense. God sees the heart (1 Samuel 16:7), so external religiosity without internal reality is worthless. True heart engagement means we come to God as we actually are, not as we pretend to be.

"In full assurance of faith" (*en plērophoria pisteōs*, ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πίστεως) indicates complete confidence and certainty. *Plērophoria* means fullness, complete conviction. This isn't presumption but appropriate confidence based on Christ's sufficient work. We can approach God boldly not because we are worthy but because Christ has made us acceptable. This assurance is not based on our feelings or performance but on God's promise and Christ's accomplished atonement.

"Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (rerrantismenoi tas kardias apo syneidēseōs ponēras, ὥεραντισμένοι τὰς καρδίας ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως πονηρᾶς) alludes to the Old Testament sprinkling of blood for purification (Leviticus 14:6-7, Numbers 19:18). Christ's blood, applied to our hearts by faith, cleanses the conscience. An "evil conscience" is one defiled by sin, burdened with guilt, accusing us before God. Christ's blood answers every accusation, satisfies every debt, and silences every charge. Our conscience is cleansed not by our good works but by His perfect sacrifice.

"And our bodies washed with pure water" (lelousmenoi to sōma hydati katharō, λελουσμένοι τὸ σῶμα ὑδατὶ καθαρῷ) likely refers to baptism as the outward sign of inward cleansing. The priests had to wash before ministering (Exodus 30:19-21); we are washed once for all in baptism, signifying our complete purification in Christ. The perfect participles "having been sprinkled" and "having been washed" indicate completed action with ongoing results—we have been definitively cleansed and remain clean through Christ's work.

Historical Context

The language of sprinkling and washing would immediately evoke Old Testament ceremonial cleansing for Jewish readers. Priests were washed at their consecration (Exodus 29:4), and ritual impurity required various washings. The Day of Atonement involved sprinkling blood on the mercy seat and the people. These rituals provided temporary, external cleansing that had to be repeated constantly.

The author argues that Christ's sacrifice provides what the old covenant rituals could only symbolize—actual, internal, permanent cleansing. The blood sprinkled is Christ's; the water is baptism in His name. The cleansing is not external and temporary but internal and eternal. God doesn't merely overlook our defilement; He actually removes it through Christ's atoning work.

The Reformation emphasized this verse's teaching on assurance. Medieval theology often left believers uncertain of their salvation, burdened with ongoing guilt despite participation in sacraments. The Reformers pointed to passages like

this to show that Christ's work produces full assurance—not presumption, but appropriate confidence based on God's promise. The Puritans developed extensive theology of conscience cleansing, emphasizing that Christian liberty includes freedom from paralyzing guilt through Christ's blood. The Westminster Confession (14.2) teaches that full assurance is not merely possible but the normal Christian experience for those trusting in Christ.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Do you approach God with the full assurance this verse describes, or do you come tentatively, uncertain of your acceptance?
2. How can you distinguish between healthy conviction of specific sins (leading to repentance) and unhealthy general guilt (contradicting Christ's complete cleansing)?
3. In what practical ways can you cultivate the habit of continually drawing near to God rather than only approaching Him in crises or formal worship?

Interlinear Text

προσερχώμεθα μετὰ ἀληθινῆς καρδίας ἐν πληροφορίᾳ

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance

G4334

with

G3326

a true

G228

heart

G2588

in

G1722

full assurance

G4136

πίστεως ἔρρωτισμένοι τὰς καρδίας ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως

of faith having heart from conscience

G4102

having

G4472

G3588

heart

G2588 G575

from conscience

G4893

πονηρᾶς καὶ λελουμένοι τὸ σῶμα ὕδατι καθαρῷ·

an evil and washed our bodies water with pure

G4190

and

G2532

washed

G3068

G3588

our bodies

G4983

water

G5204

with pure

G2513

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 36:25 (Parallel theme): Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

John 3:5 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

1 Peter 3:21 (Parallel theme): The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

1 Corinthians 6:11 (Parallel theme): And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Ephesians 5:26 (Parallel theme): That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Hebrews 7:19 (Parallel theme): For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

2 Corinthians 7:1 (Parallel theme): Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Hebrews 4:16 (Parallel theme): Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 12:24 (Parallel theme): And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Titus 3:5 (Parallel theme): Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org